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CONTENTS

Articles

Peter Beyer, <i>The Religious System of Global Society: A Sociological Look at Contemporary Religion and Religions</i>	1
Reinhard Pummer, <i>Samaritan Tabernacle Drawings</i>	30
Galen Amstutz, <i>The Politics of Pure Land Buddhism in India</i>	69
Jan G. Platvoet, <i>Close Harmonies: The Science of Religion in Dutch Duplex Ordo Theology, 1860-1960</i>	115
Monica L. Siems, <i>How Do You Say "God" in Dakota? Epistemological Problems in the Christianization of Native Americans</i>	163
Chi-tim Lai, <i>Ko Hung's Discourse of Hsien-Immortality: A Taoist Configuration of an Alternate Ideal Self-Identity</i>	183
Jacques Waardenburg, <i>Observations on the Scholarly Study of Religions as Pursued in Some Muslim Countries</i>	235
Arthur McCalla, <i>The Structure of French Romantic Histories of Religions</i>	258
Torkel Brekke, <i>Contradiction and the Merit of Giving in Indian Religions</i>	287

Book reviews

Stephen A. Geller, <i>Sacred Enigmas: Literary Religion in the Hebrew Bible</i> (Berhard LANG)	97
Vinciane Pirenne-Delforge, <i>L'Aphrodite grecque. Contribution à l'étude de ses cultes et de sa personnalité dans le panthéon archaïque et classique</i> (Christoph AUFFARTH)	98
W.A.R. Shadid and P.S. van Koningsveld (Eds.), <i>Muslims in the Margin: Political Responses to the Presence of Islam in Western Europe</i> (Abdulkader I. TAYOB)	100
Keith Stevens, <i>Chinese Gods: The Unseen World of Spirits and Demons</i> (R.J.Z. WERBLOWSKY)	101
Program for the Analysis of Religion Among Latinos Studies Series, 4 vols. (Luther MARTIN)	104
Frank Whaling (Ed.), <i>Theory and Method in Religious Studies. Contemporary Approaches to the Study of Religion</i> (Abdulkader I. TAYOB)	221

Guy G. Stroumsa, <i>Hidden Wisdom: Esoteric Traditions and the Roots of Christian Mysticism</i> (Luther H. MARTIN)	222
Richard F. Gombrich, <i>How Buddhism Began: The Conditioned Genesis of the Early Teachings</i> (Axel MICHAELS)	224
Luc Brisson, <i>Orphée et l'Orphisme dans l'Antiquité gréco-romaine</i> (Giuliana Scalera MCCLINTOCK)	321
Hans G. Kippenberg, <i>Die Entdeckung der Religionsgeschichte. Religionswissenschaft und Moderne</i> (Kocku von STUCKRAD)	324
Kangsheng Dai, Xinying Zhang, and Michael Pye (Eds.), <i>Religion and Modernization in China: Proceedings of the Regional Conference of the IAHR Held in Beijing 1992</i> (Timothy LIGHT) ...	325
Ali S. Asani and Kamal Abdel-Malek, in collaboration with A. Schimmel, <i>Celebrating Muḥammad. Images of the Prophet in Popular Muslim Poetry</i> (Edwin WIERINGA)	328
June Campbell, <i>Traveller in Space. In Search of Female Identity in Tibetan Buddhism</i> (Adelheid HERRMANN-PFANDT)	329

Announcements

IAHR Congress in Durban (Armin W. GEERTZ)	108
New Appointments in the IAHR (Armin W. GEERTZ)	331
18th Quinquennial Congress of the IAHR in Durban (Pratap KUMAR)	336

<i>Publications received</i>	110, 226, 341
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THE RELIGIOUS SYSTEM OF GLOBAL SOCIETY:
A SOCIOLOGICAL LOOK AT CONTEMPORARY RELIGION
AND RELIGIONS

PETER BEYER

Summary

Controversies within religious studies over the categories of religion and religions are reflective of changes in religion that correspond to the historical development of global society in recent centuries. The globalization of society has created social conditions that encourage the differentiation of religion as a distinct modality of social communication based on binary codes and centred on institutionalized programmes that flow from these. The result has been the gradual construction and imagining of an ambiguous but nonetheless observable and operative global religious system. From its beginnings in early modern Western Christianity, the system has spread haltingly and gradually to the rest of the world. Similar to the way the spread of the global political system brought about the discovery and construction of nations, the development of the religious system has resulted in the crystallization of 'religions,' especially but not exclusively what we now call the world religions. The examples of Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Chinese religion are discussed briefly as illustration.

Religion, World Religions, and Globalization

Like many academic disciplines, religious studies¹ has its share of persistent foundational debates. One of these concerns the prevailing division of the field according to different religions or religious traditions, most notably but not exclusively, the 'world religions.' Many scholars contest this increasingly dominant partition in principle on the grounds that both the categories of 'religion' and 'religions' are derived from Christian, or at least Western experience, and are thus unsuitable for understanding the religious aspects of non-Western cultures: constructing the discipline with these concepts amounts, one often hears, to the mistaken or imperialistic imposition of 'our' culture on 'them' (see, e.g., Fitzgerald, 1990; Paper, 1995). Some scholars, notably W.C. Smith (1964), go farther to claim that it is misleading to speak of 'religions' at all.

The foundations of this critique are multiple. First, the academic study of religion is for the most part still a Western discipline. As a whole, it carries the strong marks of its dual origins in post-Enlightenment Christian theology and in 19th century comparative study of religion, both in some measure the consequence of observers from Christian cultures attempting to come to terms with the religiously ‘others’ of non-Western civilizations.² Related to this ambiguity is the recency of the development. As Katherine Young (1992) has pointed out, while the practical orientation to ‘world religions’ is as old as the modern comparative study of religion, its rise to the position of a prime category within the field dates only from the post-World-War-II period.³ A final problem concerns which religions or religious traditions are to be the object of study. As Young points out, the list of ‘world religions’ varies considerably. Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism are the consistent members; but even here, commentators frequently remark on the artificiality of the last term (e.g., Fitzgerald, 1990; cf. Frykenberg, 1989; Thapar, 1989). Zoroastrianism, Sikhism, and Jainism usually qualify, but seem to have a sort of ‘minor religion’ status; while the religions of East Asia share a nebulous quality in that the common labels used for them—Shinto, Daoism, Confucianism, East Asian Buddhism, are generally deemed to be inappropriate or insufficient. Other religions, notably regional/indigenous (e.g., Yoruba, Oglala, Vodoun) and relatively new (e.g., Baha’i, Cao Dai, Wicca) religions receive varying attention, but the discipline generally treats them under categories (e.g., aboriginal, African, other, new) rather than individually. In all cases, members of the discipline have paid scant attention to the reasons for this inconsistent and visibly hierarchical ranking (cf. Young, 1992).

Nonetheless, inspite of these inconsistencies and misgivings, the discipline in fact, for the most part, proceeds in practical terms as if religion were a reasonably clear category, as if there were definitely such entities as religions (or at least delineated traditions), and as if the implicit rankings were somehow justifiable. Scholars of religion do not thereby forget about the ambiguities: rather, the notions of

religion and the religions are matters of practical consensus, not of agreed upon definition. Somehow, they make sense and it seems difficult to get away from them.

The purpose of the present article is to inquire into some key sociological conditions that generate this ambiguous situation. My general thesis is that the difficulties and the actual practice are not simply a matter of internal scholarly debate; that the question of religion and religions is more than observers arguing over the best ways to observe a supposedly neutral object. Instead I wish to suggest that the ambiguities reflect a particular social context, one which has brought about changes in what we now call religion and religions. These changes, I suggest, are what is at the root of the academic debates.

The social context and the transformations I refer to concern what recent sociological discussion has begun to call the globalization of society. The core notion here is that social reality on today's globe has become in an increasingly strong sense singular: social interaction or communication has become so interconnected around the world that it becomes meaningful to speak of a single global society. Globalization in this debate is significantly more than the popular media and business idea with its primarily economic and technological referents. My thesis then claims that the idea and social reality of religion differentiated from non-religion and of religions distinguished from one another are to a significant extent products and expressions of this historical development; and certainly not merely the mistaken conclusion of observers with a Western cultural or Christian bias, even though such bias is indeed a part of the picture. Moreover, I want to suggest that a useful way of conceiving these transformations in religion is to speak of the gradual formation or differentiation in the last two centuries of a single global religious system. The ideas of differentiation and system are key to my argument.

A more precise formulation of the hypothesis runs like this: We live today increasingly in a global society whose dominant, but by no means exclusive, structural features are differentiated societal systems centred on function or technique. We have, for instance, the polit-

ical, legal, economic, scientific, educational, and medical systems. Although in a somewhat ambiguous fashion, among these is a global religious system, one of the constitutive features of which is the internal differentiation of religions or religious traditions. The system and the context in which it has formed raise two persistent boundary, identity, or control questions; namely, how do we differentiate religion from non-religion? and what identifies a religion that allows us to distinguish it from others? Both these questions point to a certain selectivity of this system: it does not and cannot meaningfully include everything that might conceivably count as religious. Moreover, far from ignoring resistance to such differentiation and distinction on the part of both observers and religious actors, the hypothesis includes this in the way the system constitutes and reproduces itself. Resistance, as I show below, can have the paradoxical effect of helping to reproduce the system, not because it is ‘wrong’ or ‘ineffective,’ but because of the social context in which that resistance takes place.

One feature of this historically globalizing context is worth emphasizing at the outset. This has to do with the geographical and cultural origins of the historical development which has led to contemporary global society. Simplifying somewhat, it was in Western Europe and then the Americas that the historical ‘Great Transformation’ began in the Middle Ages and the early modern period, lending the concomitant and subsequent spread of the process around the globe a decidedly Western character. That most definitely does not mean that global society is to be understood simply as the imperialistic spread of Western society around the globe; only that globalization still bears the marks of its origins. Similarly, the global religious system bears the marks of its origins and early development in Christian society, especially in the way we tend to conceive religion and religions. The contemporary global religious system therefore looks somewhat Christian, not in a religious sense, but only in a sense parallel to the way that globalization looks like Westernization. Christianity’s conditions of origin and its longer experience with secularized and functionally oriented structures have encouraged many of us to view certain of its responses to the globalizing context as characteristically

Christian, when it may be more useful to think of them as characteristically modern. Such a view would greatly attenuate—although not negate—accusations that global systems and the global religious system are another way of saying Western imperialism and Christian bias.

The further elaboration, theoretical defense, and illustration of the hypothesis proceed along the following lines: A first section centres on *globality* and consists of a brief look at key structural and cultural aspects of globalization. The next section focuses on the concept of *system*. Selecting and adapting certain ideas from the systems theory of Niklas Luhmann, I consider—again very briefly—some of the constitutive features of modern societal systems, including the possibility of a religious version of these. A third section examines how and to what extent contemporary religion and religions are constituting such a system. I do this in the context of a very selective and illustrative historical account of the formation of the global religious system. Of prime concern here are how religion and religions have been and are being constructed. A concluding section examines some general features of the system, ones through which the separate religions relate to one another and to their larger societal environment. The prime goal of these last two sections is to show the empirical plausibility of the hypothesis. Proof is the affair of a much more extensive work.

Structure, Culture, and Religion in Global Society

The current social-scientific discussion on what can broadly be labelled globalization has by now yielded several important variations and key contributors, among which the cultural emphasis of Roland Robertson (1992), the political emphasis of Anthony Giddens (1990; 1991), and the economic emphasis of Immanuel Wallerstein (1979). The first and last of these have thus far probably had the most influence on other participants in the discussion. My own position owes much to the work of Roland Robertson, but with a heavy admixture of elements from the social theories of Niklas Luhmann (cf. 1995). Here a brief summary will suffice to describe the context in which I see the global religious system forming.

The view begins with the idea that the exceedingly complex process that led to the modern transformation of Western European society over the last centuries had at its structural core a shift in how that society formed its dominant social subunits. Where once the most salient divisions were between hierarchically related social strata or estates, for instance between nobility and commoners, there arose functionally oriented subsystems that constituted themselves around specialized instrumentalities or modalities of communication: differentiation more according to what we do than who we are. Above all, systems for politics (states), law, economy (capitalist), science, and religion developed gradually with relation to one another, that is, in response to the fact that the others were developing simultaneously, and with no clear hierarchical order among them (cf. Luhmann, 1982). In the earlier portions of this history, religion as centred on an increasingly bureaucratic Christian church not only differentiated its own specific structures and culture, but also provided important stimuli for other systems; for example, through the growth of canon law, the individualization of consciousness in the confessional, and the elaboration of rationalized thought in the monasteries and universities. In more recent centuries, however, and especially after the Protestant Reformation, the gradual shift to a primacy of functional systems has proven less favourable for the continued power of religion in Western society. Instead, systems for state-centred politics, positive law, capitalist economy, and empirically-based science have taken over as the most salient forces in that modern society.

The development of these function systems in European society has had as a direct historical consequence the gradual creation of global society. More specifically, the increasing independence of the function systems from each other and interdependence with each other allowed their accelerated instrumental effectiveness; to such an extent that the European carriers were eventually able to introduce them throughout the inhabited world. It is in this sense that Western imperialism was the historical antecedent of contemporary globalization.

These basic structural factors are, however, only one aspect of globalization. Virtually from the beginning, the expansion of these

function systems brought their European carriers into much more than incidental contact with a variety of different peoples and civilizations, along with their religious expressions. The prevailing response on the part of the Europeans was to dismiss these 'others' as precisely uncivilized and therefore in need of (European and Christian) civilization. In certain cases, however, some Europeans were after a time both impressed and influenced by those they encountered. The level of cultural complexity and achievement of especially Middle Eastern, South Asian and East Asian civilizations was no doubt in part responsible for such exceptions; and it is no coincidence that these latter are also the homes of several religions that would eventually come to be regarded as world religions, that is, standard subsystems of the global religious system (see, e.g., Almond, 1988; Marshall, 1970; Mungello, 1977).

Equally if not more important in such appreciation, but above all, identification of the religiously and culturally other were developments within the Western sphere itself, most notably the rise of politically enabled distinctions among Western cultural nations, which made it logical to find nations (or races) everywhere (cf. Anderson, 1991); and the isolation of the categories of religion and the religions, in large part because of the consequences of functional differentiation and resultant confessional splits in Christianity (cf. Byrne, 1989; Despland, 1979; Feil, 1986; 1992; Harrison, 1990; Luhmann, 1989).

Among the Westerners, this differentiation of nations/cultures and religions reached its 'take-off' period in the 18th and especially the 19th century, a period that coincided with the consolidation of European expansion into precisely those civilizational regions just mentioned (see Wallerstein, 1989). Since the later 19th and 20th centuries, non-Western regions have joined in this process of mutual self-identification, with perhaps the most obvious manifestation being the rise of non-Western nation-states. This greater appropriation by these regions of the dominant globalizing and functionally oriented instrumentalities in response to Western imperialism has included the identification and social construction of non-Western religions as distinct entities comparable to, but different from, especially Chris-

tianity. One critical result is that, along with the global spread and eventual appropriation of the instrumentalities, contemporary globalization also has as a defining and strictly related cultural aspect the mutual recognition of collective cultural units (see Lechner, 1989; Robertson, 1992), albeit units that are always contextualized or relativized by the structural dominance of function subsystems, including the religious (Beyer, 1994: 45-69).

In this last regard, religion during this historical process, somewhat like the state, has shown an important ambiguity or tension between its potential character as a universal technical orientation and an identifier of particular collectivities. As the Western and non-Western civilizations encountered each other, religion became, along with and sometimes even in opposition to the idea of nation, one of the increasingly differentiated loci of identity or, in Anderson's phrase, 'imagined community' (1991; cf. Thapar, 1989). Similar in this regard to the state-centred global political system, religion has become both a universal modality that all humankind has putatively in common, and a way of identifying difference.

Religion as a Function System

The reader unfamiliar with sociological systems theory, especially the Luhmannian version, may at this stage in the presentation be wondering precisely what a function system is supposed to be. Here cannot be the place for dealing with this question in any thorough way. A brief consideration of main characteristics can, however, serve at least to avoid certain misunderstandings. Above all, one must avoid the idea that a religious version of such a system is simply the sum of all religious activities, groups, organizations, and cultures that occur in today's world. A system is something much more selective and constructed than that, something much more intentional and operative: it is more than an abstract concept. It structures what we do as well as what we think. What I mean by a religious system is not a mere agglomeration of religious 'things,' but rather the social differentiation and social construction of a recognizably religious

category of action or way of communicating which manifests itself primarily through numerous equally recognizable social institutions⁴ (see Luhmann, 1990; 1995). The religious system is the institutional expression of the category of religion.

From a Luhmannian perspective, a social system is an entity that constitutes itself through the continuous and recursive production of connected series of communications based on meaning. The communications (and not people) are the basic elements of a social system. They are possible only on the basis of meaning; meaning provides their context and thereby connects them. Through meaning, new communications refer to other or previous communications and this recursiveness constitutes the closure or boundedness of the system, distinguishing the system from what it is not, namely its environment. It is only through this closure that the system of communications can be open to its environment. A simple although ultimately misleading parallel is a language. We can communicate about a wide variety of themes using a language, but in so doing we are limited to what the words and grammatical structures of that language can express. That limitation is necessary if we are to be able to communicate at all, and this includes the ability to communicate about something new. Closure is a necessary condition for openness.

A simple example of a social system is an interaction, say a conversation at a street corner between two people. This system arises, operates according to various simplifying and mutually expected ordering rules which constitute its closure, but is in principle open to a variety of themes and communicative events that the participants (as environment of the system) may introduce. The interaction system continues as long as the communication does. Social systems are thus forms that allow us to constitute world for ourselves, but only indirectly through such ultimately circular and selective or contingent arrangements.

Modern function systems are also social systems, but of a different kind. They do not get their identity directly from the interaction of human beings, but through focusing on a particular mode of communication and the special institutions that carry it out. Take for

instance a modern economy. This system centres on the exchange of ownership of products or commodities. The exchange is the core economic communication. The system does not predetermine what will be exchanged, only how it will be exchanged. In principle, anything can be commodified and exchanged through purchase. The system of the economy constitutes itself through such purchases which transfer ownership from one partner to another. At the heart of the system is the distinction between owning and not owning (that is, property), an organizing distinction that Luhmann calls a *binary coding*. In the modern economy, the complex processes of production, consumption, pricing, and capital formation all centre around the difference between owning/not owning, the two poles linked through the idea and social action of buying.

We could approach the other function systems through an analogous description of their root binary codings, their constitutive elements, and the programmatic institutions built around them. Examples of other binary codings are expedient/inexpedient (politic/impolitic) in the political system, legal/illegal in the legal system, healthy/unhealthy (or sick/well) in the medical system, or true/false in the science system. In each case, as with economy, we have a particular way of approaching the world, a particular specialized technique which can in principle be applied to anything. Although these systems are highly selective and thus partial, they also tend to be totalizing: virtually anything can be commodified, politicized, medicalized, be subject to scientific investigation, and so forth. This does not mean that everything is or will be absorbed or, to use Habermas' phrase, 'colonized' by these systems. Growing beans in my backyard and eating them in my kitchen is not an element of the modern economic system. I would have to sell them. Similarly, getting a cold and staying in bed is not as such an action of the modern medical system. Diagnosis and treatment through a medical institution would be. This does not, of course, exclude that either the beans or the cold will be understood by me in economic or medical terms; but for systems to be produced and reproduced, there must be communication and this requires partners who communicate and understand.

Here cannot be the place to defend in any detail the contemporary existence and dominance of these systems. My concern is rather to explore the notion that there has developed—or at least is in the process of developing—a globally extended religious version of these. For this purpose, the important questions concern what constitutes this system as a religious system and how it has formed historically. What we are looking for is the historical development of a notion of religion around which differentiated religious institutions can form, ones which are recognizably and operationally distinct from what is not religion, for example, from economy, polity, law, medicine, education, or, more generally, culture. This will be an inherently selective enterprise in the sense that only such communication as conforms to the institutional model will form and reproduce the system. Just as economy is centred on exchange and not simply on the production and consumption of goods or services; just as the educational system constructs itself around attendance at schools and not more broadly around any learning whatever; so we must look for the historical emergence in concrete social reality of a characteristically religious form of communication, with corresponding elements, institutions, and binary codings that reconstruct the world from a specifically religious perspective. This will be an inherently *selective* enterprise that will favour some forms over others, thus appearing as a distortion to those that do not like how the selection happens. It is this selectivity which, I suggest, is at the root of the ambiguity surrounding the notion of religions in contemporary scholarly study of religions. Modern ‘Hinduism,’ for instance, is not everything that the conglomerate of South Asian religious traditions has been or could be. It is a selective re-vision of the past with new things added on for the sake of viability in the present global social context. It is not simply the continuation of ‘a religion’ that has actually existed historically since, say, Vedic times and before.

The question of what counts as religion in the modern context is not, however, all that simple and straightforward. This is a problem not just of theory or observation, but also for concrete religion itself. I have suggested elsewhere (Beyer, 1994) that the overall reli-

gious binary coding is the distinction between transcendent and immanent; but actual religions of today invariably operate more directly with secondary versions of this (e.g., salvation/damnation or ignorance/enlightenment). The typically religious form of communication is easier to discern: it involves the direct or indirect communication with ‘spiritual’ or non-empirical partners or sources of agency (and thus includes the possibility of non-theistic partners), something akin to what Eliade (1959) called ‘hierophany.’ The plausibility of my thesis, however, does not rest solely or even primarily on such abstract considerations. Rather than continue in this general vein, therefore, I turn now to an illustrative overview of the historical development of the religious system over the last several centuries, especially the last two. In the course of this presentation, I deal more closely with questions of basic religious elements, binary codings of religion, and the question of how this system has constituted itself in terms of a plurality of religions analogous, but in no sense identical to, the formation of nations and states as the primary actors in a global political system.

The Historical Construction of Religions in a Global Religious System

Above, I outlined how the institutional differentiation of religion in Western European society of the medieval and early modern period played an important role in the differentiation and development of the other, now more dominant function systems, notably science, state, and economy. Christian institutions were, however, not just a general resource used by the carriers of emerging state, economy, and science to further their own projects. Christianity as specialized religion, relatively distinct from these other three, was also a result. The well-known power of the medieval church was one manifestation of this process; but so, eventually, was the Protestant Reformation and Catholic counter-Reformation which led to the establishment and corresponding conception of not only religion as a distinct enterprise, but also of the ‘religions’ (cf. Despland, 1979). For religion, differentiation led to religious pluralism. Just as the emerging political system

yielded states and not the state, so the emerging Western religious system resulted in religions and not just religion. The simultaneous rise of states and national churches in the early modern period is, from this perspective, not surprising.

The present approach must ask, however, on what basis was this religious differentiation accomplished? This is a way of asking what binary coding emerged as the characteristic one for religion. In this Christian case, the reasonably clear answer is the distinction between salvation and damnation, but to some extent with the support of the moral code, good/bad. The Christian church claimed to control access to the good of salvation through its structures and programs, in the Roman church above all through its sacraments. Differentiation on the basis of this code or codes did not happen all at once, of course. In the later Middle Ages (roughly 1100-1500) the Roman church became rather more of a multifunctional institution, recognizing such distinctions as between the ‘two swords’ and ‘reason and revelation,’ but insisting that the power or knowledge connected to salvation was primary and extended to other spheres such as science and education. With the Protestant Reformation, this logic of difference went a step further with the insistence that salvation was not determined by the criteria of other functional areas, that it was by ‘faith alone.’ The success of the Reformers, of course, depended largely on the ability of the rising political states to challenge the power of the Roman church precisely in its multifunctionality. The development of the various function systems, far from being some sort of autonomous process in each case, depended on several of them developing at once.⁵

If salvation/damnation was the code around which medieval and early modern Europeans constructed their religious beliefs and ritual practice, it was only one aspect of how religious instances responded and contributed to the development of a new and different societal context. Another very important dimension, with strong precedent in earlier Christianity, was the further *organization* of religion. Especially in Western Europe, the Christian church during the earlier Middle Ages was the only unifying presence largely because of its internal

organization. Later, the Rome-centred church greatly accelerated this historical tendency when faced with the rising challenge of political powers. With the confessional splits brought on by the Protestant Reformation, the churches, now plural, far from abandoning the tactic, continued it, especially in the form of attachments of certain church organizations to certain political states. Religion, not for the first time in this story, so to speak hitched its wagon to other functionally oriented institutions (and vice versa, of course). This again resulted in various protest movements that wanted to ‘restore’ the functional purity of the church, leading to a multitude of Protestant churches, most frequently organized along sectarian and then denominational lines. In the British-based colonial countries of North America and Australasia, denominational organization became the prevailing form of religious organization after the late 18th century precisely as a response to the logic of functional differentiation (church and state) and its attendant values (inclusion or democratic/voluntary participation) (cf. Beyer, 1997). In the case of the largest such Christian organization, the Roman Catholic church, the post-Tridentine period saw the continuation of the strategy so as increasingly to fashion this church as a quasi-state (until 1870 even with its own territory), eventually leading to the express sacralization of the organization itself in the 19th century.

The prevailingly organizational strategy was not a futile one. It allowed Christian religion to maintain strong authority structures and public influence for quite some time, especially by attaching itself to some of the developing function systems, the political at first and most notably, but also the rising educational and later medical systems. Most important for our purposes in this regard, however, was the successful attachment to the Western imperial project which has been at the historical root of modern globalization. Here we move directly into the formation of the contemporary global religious system.

If the originally Western process of rising function systems tended to assign religion to one social modality among several, essentially situating religion as a partial concern beside non-religious concerns, the imperial expansion of Western powers eventually amplified that

relativization and identification by setting up Christianity as but one religion among many; equal to the others, but not superior. If salvation/damnation became a partial concern in Western society, it became but an alternative for even the religious modality and code in global society.

In spite of this ambiguity or even weakness, the imperial project has led to the globalization of (an admittedly largely privatized or voluntary) Christianity so that it is now and will likely remain for the foreseeable future, the religion with the largest following in the world. Organization has been key to this success and not attachment to one or more states. In addition, and far more important for my purposes here, the response patterns which Christians and Christian churches established for appropriating and reacting to the modernization and globalization processes have become, if not normative, then certainly the models to which other religions have either conformed or reacted. For better or worse, Christianity has set the prevailing standard for what ‘a religion’ looks like. Not through any conviction of some inherent ‘truth’ in Christianity, but largely because of similarity of social context, other religions in the world have increasingly formed themselves along the Christian pattern, up to and including express resistance to the consequences of globalization for religion. Thus, for example, not only do we see such phenomena as the ‘protestantization’ (laicization) of Theravada Buddhism and the partial organization of Hinduism, but also the denominationalization (and sectarianization) of Judaism and ‘fundamentalisms’ among Muslims, the latter complete with politicization and an emphasis on ‘family values’ in the bid to support or reclaim public *religious* authority. The result, increasingly, is a multifaceted, ambiguous, and controversial global religious system that constitutes itself through the recursive and continuous production of a recognizable modality of communication, centred on specific codes (more than one!) and corresponding programmes. If this religious system is less powerful and homogeneous than the capitalist economic system, the system of political states or the scientific-technological system, it is nonetheless

less still a recognizable system. The category of religion as a distinct enterprise has largely been institutionalized around the globe.

The pattern of formation outside the Christian sphere can perhaps best be illustrated in the case of South Asia, not least because previous incorporation of this region into ‘Islamdom’ did not have similar results. This fact is significant because, in several respects, the British Raj represented just another outside conqueror with a different religious identification. Indeed, from a religious perspective, the Muslims ruled longer and converted more South Asians. In other words, they seemed to constitute a greater and longer lasting ‘threat to Hinduism’ than did the supposedly Christian British; and yet it was only under the British that we see among Hindus and non-Hindus deliberate attempts to ‘imagine’ a unified religious tradition or community that could be labelled Hinduism. This entity, in spite of the tremendous religious diversity that the term was meant to cover, has come to be seen by observers and practitioners alike as a single religion beside others, as an example of a general category. The comparative emphasis is the most important distinguishing feature from previous systematizing efforts such as that of Shankara or Ramanuja: the new identity is constructed with reference to others.

Yet it was not simply the awareness of religious plurality that made the difference; nor was it the advent of religious conflict. These had an exceedingly long history in South Asia. Instead, it was the functionally differentiated social context that the British introduced. Included under this heading would be a wide variety of institutions and technologies. The introduction and rapid spread of printing made it possible to sharpen and solidify religious differences and to spread successful formulations in a uniform manner over far greater areas and to far more people; and this often in express competition with representatives of ‘other’ religions, especially Islam and Christianity. Other technologies such as the railroad enhanced the process. Incorporation of Indians into colonial administration, army, and eventually government along ‘ethno-religious’ (communal) lines intensified the logic of identifying religions, with the residual category being ‘Hinduism.’ European scholars with a decidedly Christian bias looked

for, found, and helped revive broader interest in Hindu (and other) ‘scriptures,’ especially the Vedas, Upanishads, and Epics, thus identifying a written basis for the religion parallel to the Middle Eastern religious traditions. And the colonial legal and political system was frequently used to help define what authoritative Hinduism (or other religion) was in a particular area. In these last two cases especially, European and Indian elites combined to further the process: it was in no sense a unidirectional one in which the colonial powers or the Western observers simply imposed their view of things on the natives.

Out of this complex context emerged various organized movements, such as the Brahmo Samaj, the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, the Arya Samaj, the (European based!) Theosophists, the Bharat Dharma Mahamandala, more recently the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, to mention but a few (see Jones, 1989 for an overview). The prevalence of organizational strategy again manifests itself. Such movements did not deliver a uniform vision of what constitutes Hinduism; and the question of secondary codes can in fact not be answered straightforwardly in this case. Nonetheless, they allowed the observable emergence of patterns of religious practice that together constituted Hinduism (cf. Frykenberg, 1989; Keppley Mahmoud, 1993). The fact that this process was inconceivable without the parallel rise of first Indian nationalism (including its explicitly Hindu variants) and then the Indian state itself only underscores the degree to which the functional differentiation of religion in global society is part and parcel of the institutionalization of function systems as its dominant structures.

Although developments within South Asia itself were the primary ones, other aspects and events have significantly strengthened the identification of Hinduism as a religious tradition among others. Two examples stand out and are often mentioned in the literature. The first is Swami Vivekananda’s performance at the First World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893. Not only did this follower of Ramakrishna impress the Christian organizers who still felt secure in the, to them, self-evident superiority of their religion; Vivekananda was much hailed in India itself simply because he demonstrated to Christians and Westerners the value and wisdom of Hindu culture.

Religion, his admirers believed, was one area in which India had something to teach the West. The story attests to the status of religion as a global modality; it is the spiritual modality beside all the material ones.

The second example concerns the exporting of Hinduism to other parts of the globe both through missions and migration. Well before the 1960s, before ISKCON and the Maharishi Maheshyogi, Westerners were attracted by the Wisdom of the East. And through the medium of the British Empire, South Asians migrated around the world, carrying their religious identity (a disproportionate number were in fact Sikhs, whose religious identity was also being solidified during the time under discussion and in a like manner) with them. Most often, living in a different place has encouraged these migrants to reconstruct, organize, and identify ‘their religion’ both for themselves and for the non-Hindus around them. Hinduism, whatever the difficulties in saying precisely what it is, whatever the protests that to speak like this is to impose Western categories where they are inappropriate, is now a ‘world religion’ in identity, in self-conception, and in social reality.

This sort of analysis can be carried out for other religions as well. In a short article, however, it is not possible to look very closely at too many of them. Therefore, I restrict my remaining comments to two cases, Islam and Chinese religion, because they illustrate two different aspects of the historical process. In the first case, we have a clear example of how the religion/nonreligion distinction is problematic in global society and how that furthers the development of a global religious system rather than hindering it. In the second case, the identification and construction process has not happened, thereby illustrating the non-necessity and even fragility of the system, and perhaps the hypothesis itself.

If the chief transformations with regard to my question of a global religious system in Eastern religions have been in terms of the religion/nonreligion distinction, the problem of constructing comparative identity; then Islam displays in more acute form than any of the others the difficulty of the religion/non-religion distinction. Islam,

like the others, has undergone various transformations as the areas in which it is dominant have been incorporated into the global system. In this regard, the later 20th century has given particular prominence to movements and forms that resist secularization and privatization explicitly by denying or attempting to deny the religion/non-religion distinction in the case of their tradition. It is far from uncommon to hear the cry coming from devout Muslims: ‘Islam is not a religion, it is a way of life!’ So strong is this tendency that, at least in part, Islamic orthodoxy today—that is, the core identity of the tradition—is being defined in terms of resistance to the distinction and the secularization of other spheres of society that it implies. The chief tactics in this regard seem to be, parallel to conservative Christian efforts, to attempt dedifferentiation, at the level of the family and often education in diaspora areas and the legal system (e.g., India) or the state where the concentration of Muslims makes such a strategy viable.

Far from distinguishing Islam as a tradition that is not a religion and therefore not to be counted as a subsystem of the global religious system, the strategy actually contributes to the further delineation and definition of that system and of Islam as a subsystem of it. To begin, the protest that ‘Ours is not a religion’ is common to all the major traditions. Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, and Shintoists insist or have insisted the same thing. Like Muslims, they have pointed out that their religions are holistic and affect all areas of life; they have insisted that rather than being contradictory of science and economics, they are actually the necessary basis of all good science and economy, not to mention politics, law, art, and family life. What distinguishes Islam in this regard is only its comparative success in influencing politics and law in various Muslim countries.

The fact that the protest is to be found emanating from all major religious traditions indicates that the religion/non-religion distinction is problematic for religion. As I discussed above, the functionally differentiated subsystems that are at the structural core of globalization and thus global society define themselves by their relative independence (but not autarchy) from their fellows. From the perspective of

religion, this constitutes secularization but not necessarily privatization. The former is not the problem for religion, since all subsystems must deal with this mutual independence. Rather it is the threat or actuality of the latter: the decline of public religious authority. In terms of the religious system, this points precisely to problems with the religious code. For Muslims as for Christians and Buddhists, the question is not whether Islam or Hinduism are religions or ways of life—they are of course both much like capitalism refers both to an economy and a way of life. Instead, the question is ‘how does this religious tradition code the world?’

For Islam the answer has historically been in largest part: halal/haram-permitted/forbidden, or simply legal-illegal. If this were to be abandoned, Islam would be left with other secondary codings, especially the moral good/bad and the Abrahamic salvation/damnation. These, however, are problematic in the modern global context in the sense that they have in the cases of Christianity and Judaism largely lead to the privatization of religion (cf. Beyer, 1994: 70-96). Accordingly, it is not at all surprising that the core demand of so-called Muslim fundamentalists around the world is that Shari'a be made the law of the land. It is an Islamic way of defending a very powerful *religious* code, but a code that in the modern context has been establishing its independence, especially its independence from religious programmings of it.

In light of this Islamic specificity, the protest that Islam is different is actually an indicator that it is not. Proponents of deprivatized Islam want their religious tradition to remain powerful as religion, not to dissolve it into a generalized aspect of culture. Religious authority is to be strengthened and further institutionalized, not generalized. The protest ‘ours is not a religion’ is then itself a sign that we are dealing with a religion among others. There are, however, certain ‘religious traditions’ whose position in the global religious system is more ambiguous or even totally absent. I turn now to the example of Chinese religion.

The Chinese example is in a real sense either the exception that proves the rule or it shows that the question of a global religious

system is not tautological: its nonexistence is possible. Chinese society has exhibited a great deal of what generally counts as religion. This complex of religious beliefs and practices has a clear historical and objective interconnectedness: there is an observable unity in the diversity which makes it possible to speak of Chinese religion. Nonetheless, that unity has no generally accepted and clear label nor differentiated institutions that correspond to it. Certainly neither the name Daoism, much less the Western term of Confucianism occupies this place. The anomaly of Chinese religion is therefore not that it should be a religion but is not. The anomaly is that Chinese religion as a whole has not undergone the recent identification process so well exemplified especially in the case of Hinduism. Attempts at labelling it as Sinism have remained observers suggestions (see Creel, 1929); they have not become rooted in social reality. The reasons for this state of affairs are multiple and perhaps to some extent uncertain; but one can approach them by looking at the possible reasons that neither Daoism nor Confucianism have filled this role.

If one examines the attitudes of later 19th and early 20th century Chinese elites toward the category of religion, one gets a reasonable idea of not only why no specifically Chinese religion has been constructed, but also the degree to which that failure has everything to do with the category of religion itself and with the globalizing context. As China became incorporated into the global system during the 19th and 20th centuries, one of the constant tasks of this elite was to find a way in which China could once again be great, but now as a major actor in the global system, and no longer as the centre of civilization as such. Essentially, they looked for ways to modernize, with or without Westernizing. One reformer, Kang Yuwei, did seriously attempt to institutionalize Confucianism as the religion of the Chinese and as the state religion of China. His attempt failed completely, largely because his fellow modernizing elites either rejected the Confucian heritage altogether or considered that the value of that heritage lay precisely in the fact that it was not a religion. Confucianism was superior to Christianity because it was a this-worldly ethical philosophy and not a system for communicating with gods, spirits, or

other forms of extra-human agency. Here we have not resistance to the restriction of religion to one social sphere among others, but the rejection of the typical social form of religion. These Chinese elites did recognize the category of religion, and they understood it as centred around 'hierophanic' communication. They recognized religions such as Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, and sometimes even Daoism. This latter they generally regarded as the embarrassing practices of the superstitious masses; and the former were foreign imports, not or only partially Chinese. Daoist religious leaders did not have the sort of legitimacy that would have allowed them to form broadly based Daoist movements. The modernizing leaders who could have been instrumental in the imagining of a modern Chinese religion did not do so because they felt that this would undermine the more important project of (re)constructing a viable Chinese identity for the modern and global world.

If we accept this analysis, then the most important conclusion to draw in the present context is that the absence of 'Sinism' and the invention or selective construction of Hinduism stem from analogous circumstances in two different areas of emerging global society. The Chinese have thus far eschewed the category and most of the typical institutional forms of religion as they attempted to appropriate the dominant global systemic forms, mainly the nation-state and the global economy. The Indians embraced the notion of religion in the process of their rather different path to global incorporation.

The examples of Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and the Chinese case are of course only very skeletal illustrations. The sole intention here is to show the plausibility of the notion that religion as category and differentiated institutional sphere is of relatively recent historical origin and makes sense in the context of globalization.

The Global Religious System: Unity in the Differences

The aspect of the overall thesis defended in the previous section is that religions have developed in the last two centuries as the subsystems of a global religious system, much like nation-states have

developed as subsystems in the global political system. As with the political system, however, we also have to look at how the subsystems relate to one another in the overall system. This aspect, it must be stressed, is not a logical derivative of the religions themselves: while much of the culture of the religions preexists the system, their constitution as subsystems, as religions of the global religious system does not. The primary unit of analysis is the global religious system. Its religions constitute themselves in terms of the other religions: this means that the relations among them are as constitutive of the system as the traditions themselves.

To begin this consideration, it may be helpful to continue the comparison with the more clearly developed political system of states. What are the mechanisms of inter-religious relations that might correspond to those of international relations? What are the equivalents of the United Nations, international diplomacy, and war in the religious sphere. As concerns the first, there is actually very little to find as of yet and this is undoubtedly a main reason for the vagueness of the system, its lack of incontrovertible social existence. The fact that the second World Parliament of Religions met a full 100 years after the first hardly attests to the importance of this global institution. But it may be a start. Under the analogical heading of diplomacy and war there is, however, substantially more. What among Christians is called the ecumenical movement has its inter-religious side, above all in the form of interreligious dialogue. Far from being merely a casual talking to each other, such dialogue is actually better seen as a sort of global religious ritual: the idea is to gain better insight, not only into the other's religious tradition, but into one's own as well. It may be of note that the secondary codings of the different religions cannot operate here alone, lending meaning to the search for some generalized and unifying polarity, perhaps spiritual/material, even though this one really cannot function as a genuinely religious polarity. The same can be said for efforts to theologize the unity in the form of world theologies such as that of W.C. Smith or Hans Küng (see Smith, 1981; Küng, 1988), another instance

of observation that is part of the actual formation and reproduction of the system.

The result of interreligious dialogue, however, as with interaction among states, is better mutual identification and not necessarily or just more homogenization, let alone proselytization: even though these latter may be the secret or open hope of some participants. As in the case of religious representatives who protest the religious categorization, so interreligious dialogue, even when carried out in ‘bad faith’ (according to whom?) operates so as to further delineate and perpetuate the global religious system as a differentiated system with its own characteristic communication.

Moving on to the question of inter-religious ‘war,’ the dominant mechanism here is undoubtedly not war at all since most so-called religious wars (e.g., in Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka, Bosnia, Punjab, Israel/Palestine) are only tangentially about religion or at least more expressly about politics (expedient/inexpedient—diplomacy by other means). Instead, more expressly religious words like mission or proselytization are the more appropriate terms. In fact, at this point it is probably better to switch systemic analogies and speak about religious competition rather than war. Religions are neither states nor are they economic corporations, but in this case the corporate comparison is more enlightening.⁶ The inclusion of missions as important mechanisms of the global religious system points to the fact that this system is not restricted to the religious activities of the more inclusive and tolerant ‘liberals’ within each tradition. The Pentecostal or Mormon missionary and the migrating Vaishnavite guru reproduce the system as much as and perhaps more than the Dalai Lama or Pope John Paul II. What constitutes the global system is a common modality of communication and not a common attitude to the religiously other. The various missionary and proselytizing efforts are instrumental in helping to further define what will count as religion and what forms different religions will take. Here again, the formation of religious movements and religious organizations is probably key. Without them, the religions could not appear as distinct from other modalities.

A final question concerns the possibilities of new subsystems of the religious subsystem, that is, new religions. Quite obviously, just as new states can form and certainly new business corporations form all the time, so new religions can form and do so all the time. In many cases, these will be partially on the basis of new hierophanies, partially on the basis of old, as is the case with Wicca, Cao Dai, and Baha'i. In some, such as the possible case of Chinese religion already discussed, we may in the future witness the imagining and identification of a religion that is in most senses quite old. In this category, aboriginal religions in North America and elsewhere, as well as indigenous African religions would perhaps be more current and intriguing candidates. Then, of course, there are the totally new religions or those that are so eclectic as to appear entirely new, such as Scientology or Unificationism. In all these cases, the operative question is, how much are they part of the global religious system.

In one sense, they are so as soon as they construct themselves around religious communication. In a stronger sense, however, they become part of the system when they identify themselves and are identified by observers as religions. This factor raises again a very important last point: to a very significant degree, the religious system of global society depends for its formation and reproduction on observation, as do all systems. Part and parcel of, not only identifying new religions, but also identifying the old ones and the system as such is the effort by both outsiders (including scholars) and insiders to see them, to understand and identify them as religious traditions and as religion, and then to act on that basis. That aspect, as I indicated especially in the short discussion of the imagining of Hinduism, was not only present in the formative period of the system during the last two centuries. It is even more important today. Therefore one might say that my attempt here to observe the global religious system is primarily a scientific task of explanation, but one that also has potential theological consequences. This brings me back, in conclusion, to the ambiguous situation in the contemporary academic study of religion that I discussed at the outset.

Those who say that it is inappropriate to use Christian and Western conceptions of religion to understand other traditions are entirely justified, but only if the object of study is religion before the modern era. When the religion we are examining is contemporary, then such delineation and modelling must become part of the observation simply because that is an important aspect of the religious reality that observers and religious practitioners have in fact constructed and are still in the process of constructing. Here we have the reason that one of the main criteria for qualifying as a 'world religion' is that the religion in question be a 'living' religion (cf. Young, 1992). The category of world religion along with the ambiguities and controversies surrounding it have arisen because the phenomenon under observation has been in the process of forming, and only in that context because we observers cannot escape our cultural biases. Indeed, the recognition of the biases themselves is a symptom of the historical and social object of our observation.

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¹ Or other titles such as comparative religions, history of religions, the academic study of religions.

² A still very useful introduction to the history of the field is offered in Sharpe, 1986. On the problems of extending the field beyond its Western societal base, see several of the contributions in Pye, 1989.

³ It is probably not coincidental that the same period has seen the founding of the International Association for the History of Religions (in 1950) and important regional bodies such as the American Academy of Religion (in 1959).

⁴ The word here is to be understood in its broad sociological sense of any normative social arrangement or pattern: not just hospitals, schools, and corporations, but holiday celebrations, marriage, and departmental meetings as well.

⁵ For the parallel case of the development of a states-centred political system depending on the parallel development of a capitalist economic system, see Wallerstein, 1974; Elias, 1982.

⁶ Efforts such as those of Stark & Bainbridge, 1987, to construct economic models for understanding religion are therefore entirely justified; but on my account, they

cannot be the basis of a theory of religion because exchange is the centrepiece of the economic modality, not the religious. Similarly, overly communal models of religion which insist that religion is only worth the name when it acts as an integrating sacred canopy also miss the mark. They refer to religion only in certain socio-structural circumstances, namely those in which religion is not differentiated as specialized institutions.

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SAMARITAN TABERNACLE DRAWINGS

REINHARD PUMMER

Summary

Drawings of the Israelite tent sanctuary, the Tabernacle, and its implements are the main expression of representational art among the Samaritans. They are based on the descriptions in *Exodus* and are expressions of central tenets of the Samaritan faith—belief in the special status of Moses, in the Tabernacle as the only legitimate sanctuary in the history of Israel, and in the end times for which the restoration of the Tabernacle is expected. The paper is an attempt to probe the question of the age of the Samaritan tradition of depicting the Tabernacle in different media.

Archaeological excavations have revealed synagogue mosaics and clay lamps from the Byzantine period that represent various elements of this artistic tradition. However, the main specimens date from the early sixteenth to the early twentieth century. It is these representations, executed on metal, cloth, parchment and paper, which are the focus of this article. The discussion is based on an examination of all extant and publicly accessible samples (see the Inventory at the end of this article).

A great chronological and artistic gap separates the representations on the mosaics and oil lamps of the Byzantine period from the drawings of modern times. No continuous line exists between the two groups. The parchment in Moscow that allegedly dates from 32 A.H., i.e., 652/653 C.E., must be assigned to a much later period.

There are obvious similarities of the Samaritan drawings with Jewish representations of the Tabernacle/Temple, yet it is impossible to identify a time or place where cross-fertilization may have taken place.

At the present state of our knowledge, therefore, neither the mosaics from the Byzantine period nor the similarities with Jewish representations enable us to determine the time at which the Samaritan tradition of making Tabernacle drawings may have originated. It is probable, though, that the tradition had its beginnings well before the oldest extant samples from the early sixteenth century.

The Mosaic Tabernacle plays an important role in the Samaritan tradition. It was the only legitimate sanctuary in the history of Israel, and will be restored at the end of times, either by the “prophet like

Moses" (Deut. 18: 18), or by Moses himself, or, from the 14th cent. on, by the Taheb, the Samaritan eschatological prophet.¹

According to Samaritan beliefs, the Tabernacle was set up on Mount Gerizim after the Israelites had entered the land of Canaan.² When a quarrel broke out "between Eli son of Yafnī, of the line of Ithamar, and the sons of Phinehas, because Eli son of Yafnī resolved to usurp the High Priesthood from the descendants of Phinehas,"³ Eli moved to Shiloh where he built a schismatic temple. After this quarrel, the fire in the Tabernacle on Mt. Gerizim went out and all the usual signs of the divine favour, **הנורא**, disappeared. Uzzi then gathered together the sacred vestments as well as the gold and silver vessels and sealed them in a cave that he marked with an inscription. Next morning, all traces of the cave had disappeared.⁴ This event marks the beginning of the time of divine disfavour or **פנינה**. Although these details are contained in medieval Samaritan chronicles, the tradition of the hidden vessels goes back at least to the time of Josephus.⁵ Moreover, the text of the Samaritan Pentateuch attests to the early beliefs of the Samaritans concerning the sanctity of Mt. Gerizim and, implicitly, its sanctuary.

For the Samaritans, Mt. Gerizim was the place that God had chosen,⁶ and, as mentioned already, the Tabernacle the only rightful place of worship. The sanctuaries erected afterward in Shiloh and in Jerusalem were, in their eyes, illegitimate. However, ancient texts and modern archaeology point to the existence of a Samaritan temple on Mt. Gerizim at a much later time than that of Eli. According to Flavius Josephus, the Samaritans built a temple there in the 4th cent. B.C.E. that was modelled on the one in Jerusalem.⁷ And recent excavations on the main peak of the mountain⁸ have confirmed that a sanctuary must have existed there as early as the Persian period.⁹ Yet, with the possible exception of one passage in the chronicle of Abū l-Fath,¹⁰ this later temple is ignored in Samaritan writings.¹¹ It is also ignored in Samaritan art—all the drawings of a sanctuary are of the Mosaic Tabernacle.

Like the Jews, the Samaritans depicted their sanctuary and its implements already in antiquity on clay oil lamps and mosaic floors. In

more recent times, both traditions produced drawings of their *sacra* on parchment and paper. In the case of the Samaritans, the Tabernacle implements were also engraved on a metal Torah scroll case and embroidered on a silk hanging in the synagogue in Nablus. It is these more recent Samaritan representations that are the focus of this article.

The drawings were made on the basis of the biblical description of the Tabernacle in *Exodus*. Although they differ from each other in details, they exhibit a basic uniformity of style from the earliest to the most recent specimens. They are the main and almost only instances of representational art among the Samaritans.¹² As such, and as expressions of fundamental Samaritan beliefs, they deserve to be examined as a whole.

J.D. Purvis has recently discussed in detail the objects that are depicted on the drawings, and the differences to Jewish and Christian views on the Tabernacle, primarily on the basis of two specimens that are kept in Boston University.¹³ There is no need to repeat here Purvis' thorough descriptions and analyses. Nor is there any reason to retrace the discussion about the hiding of the Tabernacle vessels related in the Samaritan sources. It suffices to refer to the works of H.G. Kippenberg,¹⁴ F.M. Collins,¹⁵ F. Dexinger,¹⁶ and, recently, I. Kalimi and J.D. Purvis.¹⁷

What does need fresh examination is the dating of the Samaritan tradition to make drawings of the Tabernacle and its implements. With one exception, all extant specimens date from the 16th and 19th/20th cent. One drawing is dated by its editor in the 7th cent. C.E. Although it is in a poor state of preservation, a re-examination of the legends on it, and a comparison with other drawings can be made. An additional point of reference are depictions of Tabernacle implements on mosaic floors of synagogues that were recently excavated in Samaria. Furthermore, the similarities between the Samaritan and the Jewish drawings of the Tabernacle/Temple implements must be assessed anew.

The following paper will attempt to shed light on this Samaritan art form and try to reach a conclusion as to the date of its earliest

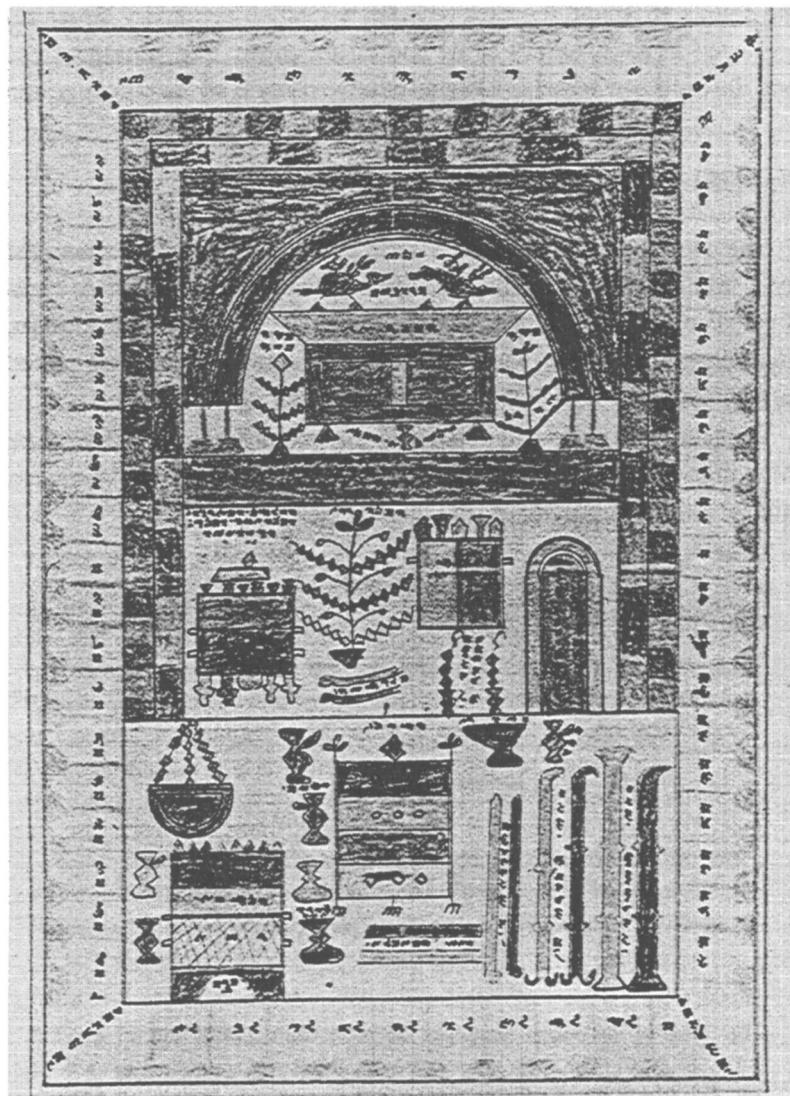


Figure 1. London, Valmadonna Trust Library 20e (I). By courtesy of the Trustees of the Valmadonna Trust Library.

extant samples. It will be based on a study of all known specimens, the details of which, together with the respective secondary literature, are listed in an inventory at the end of the paper. The photograph of one drawing can serve as a representative sample of the whole genre.

The Tabernacle and its Implements

The overall appearance of the Tabernacle is a rectangle surrounded by a frame and divided into two parts; the upper half often is again divided into two sections. A title, either at the top or the bottom, identifies the drawing. The various objects in the drawings are named in short legends adjacent to or directly on the objects.

Typically, the following features are found in Samaritan Tabernacle drawings. Not all of them are present on every image, and some can appear in different parts of the Tabernacle.¹⁸

Title:¹⁹

תְּבִנַּת מִשְׁכָּנָה עַל הַיּוֹתֵר אֲתַעַשֶּׂת²⁰, “picture of the Holy Tabernacle made according to the order;”²¹ תְּבִנַּת מִשְׁכָּנָה בְּלֹא תְּשִׁיבָת²², “picture of the Tabernacle without likeness;”²² תְּבִנַּת מִשְׁכָּנָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֱלֹהִים מֹשֶׁה בַּמִּדְבָּר²³, “picture of the holy Tabernacle which our Master Moses made in the desert;”²³ וְהִזְמָנָה תְּבִנַּת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ עַל אַרְקָן אֲשֶׁר הוּא בְּכֻבְשָׁת שְׁמַנִּים²⁴, “this is a picture like (the) picture that is found on the Ark which is in the synagogue of the Samaritans (in) Shechem;”²⁴ וְהִזְמָנָה תְּבִנַּת מִשְׁכָּנָה קָדְשָׁה בְּהַר גְּרִיזִים²⁵, “this is a picture of the holy Tabernacle on Mount Gerizim;”²⁵ מֹשֶׁה בַּמִּדְבָּר וַיַּהֲשִׁעַ נָנָן גְּזֻבָּה בְּהַר גְּרִיזִים מִלְּשָׁבֵם כְּמָא (sic) אָמַר בְּתוֹרָה²⁶, “picture of the Tabernacle of Testimony which Moses made in the desert and Joshua ben Nun set up on Mt. Gerizm opposite Shechem²⁶ as he (Moses) said in the Torah.”²⁷

Frame:

The frame of the design represents the outer court (*חַזְרָה* *הַמִּשְׁכָּן*; cf. Exod. 27: 9-19; 38: 9-20). The sixty columns are usually numbered in the fashion *עַמְדוֹן* & *עַמְדוֹת*, etc. Sometimes the numbering begins in the upper right corner, other times in the upper left corner. The direction of the numbering also varies—it proceeds either clockwise or counter clockwise. On some drawings²⁸ the names of the Israelite tribes appear in the inside frame (cf. Num. 2: 1-34).

Upper half:

The upper, i.e., eastern, half represents the Tabernacle proper with the Holy of Holies on the very top. In the Holy of Holies are depicted the Ark (ארון העזרה), the Mercy-Seat (הכפרה), two winged creatures (שנני ברובים), and the rods of Aaron and Moses²⁹ מטה משה and מטה אהרן; see Exod. 25: 10-22; 37: 1-9; Num. 17: 16-26).³⁰

Below the Holy of Holies a band symbolizes the screen for the entrance of the Tent (see Exod. 26: 36; 27: 16; 35: 12.15.17; etc.). On one drawing,³¹ only the word identifies it, but on the others it contains a text:³² אה[ן] ושמרי הקדש בבנו אלע[ז]ר בבנו פינ[ח]ס שישי [בחקי] ועדי בימי [עזי] הסתיר יהוה משכנה קדשו. “Aa[ron] and the guardians of the sanc]tuary, [his] son [Elea]zer, [his] son [Pin]has, Shishi, [Behq]i,³³ and Uzzi; in the days [of Uzzi] YHWH hid the holy Tabernacle;”³⁴ שמרי משמרת הקודש; משה אהרן אלע[ז]ר פינחס אבישע ושישי ובחקי ועדי. “guardians of the holy trust: Moses, Aaron, Eleazar, Pinhas, Shishi, Behqi, Uzzi; in the days of Uzzi YHWH hid the holy Tabernacle;”³⁵ שמרי משמרת הקודש: משה אהרן אלע[ז]ר פינחס אבישע ושישי ובחקי ועדי. “guardians of the holy trust: Aaron and Moses, Eleazar and Pinhas, Abisha and Shishi and Behqi and Uzzi;”³⁶ אלה שמות שמרי משמרת הקודש: משה ואהרן ואלעזר ופינחס ועדי. “these are the names of the guardians of the holy trust: Moses and Aaron and Eleazar and Pinhas and Abisha and Shishi and Behqi and Uzzi; and in the days of this Uzzi YHWH hid the Tabernacle;”³⁷ אלה שמות הכהנים הגדולים אשר שמרי משמרת הקודש אהרן ומשה אלעזר. “these are the names of the high priests who guarded the holy trust: Aaron and Moses, Eleazar and Pinhas and Abisha and Shishi and Beqi and Uzzi; and in the days of Uzzi YHWH hid the Tabernacle; may YHWH restore it to us;”³⁸ אלה שמות שמרי קדשו אהרן אלעזר ופינחס אבישע ושישי ובחקי ועדי בימי. “these are the names of the guardians of the holy (trust): Moses and Aaron, Eleazar and Pinhas and Abisha and Shishi and Behqi and Uzzi; in the days of Uzzi YHWH hid the Tabernacle; we ask God in his goodness: may he restore it to us, to us;”³⁹ שמרי משכנה קדשה אהרן אלעזר ופינחס אבישע ושישי ובחקי ועדי. “the guardians of the holy Tabernacle: Aaron and Eleazar, Ithamar and Pinhas, Abisha and Shishi, Behqi and Uzzi;”⁴⁰ שמרי משכנה קדשה אהרן אלעזר ויתמר ופינחס וששי. “guardians of the hole Tabernacle: Aaron and Eleazar and Ithamar and Pinhas and Shishi and Behqi and Uzzi; upon them be peace for ever;”⁴¹ שמרי משמרת הקדש אהרן אלעזר ויתמר ופינחס וששי. “guardians of the holy Tabernacle: Aaron and Eleazar and Ithamar and Pinhas, Shishi, Beqi, Uzzi; upon them be peace;”⁴² שמרי משמרת הקדש: משה ואהרן: ואלעזר: ופינחס: אבישע: וששי: ובחקי: עדי: ובזמי: אסתיר יהוה משכנה:

"guardians of the holy trust: Moses and Aaron, and Eleazar, and Pinhas, and Abisha, Shishi and Behqi, Uzzi; and in those days YHWH hid the Tabernacle."⁴⁴

This is not the place to go into further details, but two points should be noted here. First, in the Samaritan Chronicles, the usual sequence after Amram is Aaron and Moses, Eleazar, Pinhas, Abisha, Shishi, Behqi and Uzzi.⁴⁵ The last six are the high priests of the period of Divine Favour.⁴⁶ Second, in the Pentateuch, neither Beqi nor Shishi are priests. Beqi, or Buqqi (בָּקִי) in the Masoretic text, is the name of the leader of the Danites in Num. 34: 22; and Shishi, or Sheshai (שֵׁשַׁי) in the Masoretic text, is the name of one of the sons of Anak, in Num. 13: 22. The name Uzzi does not occur in the Pentateuch. All three names, however, are part of the priestly genealogy of Ezra in the Masoretic text and in the apocrypha, i.e., in Ezra 7: 1-5; 1 Chron. 5: 29-31; 6: 35; 1 Esdr. 8: 1-2. In these passages, the first seven priests after Aaron are the same as in the Samaritan lists.

Below the "screen" appear the following: the Menorah (מְנוֹרָה; Exod. 25: 31-40; 37: 17-24), the Table of Showbread (שְׁלֹחַ לְתָמִים; Exod. 25: 23-30; 37: 10-16), the Altar of Incense or the Golden Altar (מִזְבֵּחַ הַהֲבָרֶת or מִזְבֵּחַ קָדְשָׁה; Exod. 30: 27 etc.; 30: 1; 39: 38 etc.), the jar for the Manna (אַגְּזוֹת הַמִּנְנָה; cf. Exod. 16: 32-33), the two tongs (שְׁתִּים מְלֻכִּיהִים; see Num. 4: 9),⁴⁷ fire pans (מְתוּנוֹת; see Num. 4: 9),⁴⁸ and the entrance to the Tent of Meeting (פִּתְחַ אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד; Exod. 26: 36-37; 36: 37-38).⁴⁹

Lower half:

The lower, i.e., western, half contains the implements in the court. They are: the laver (בְּרוּךְ הַשְׂדֵךְ; Exod. 30: 17-21; 38: 8), the garments of the high priest (בְּגִימָרָה; בְּגִימָרָה; בְּגִימָרָה; בְּגִימָרָה; Exod. 28: 1-43), including the headdress (מִגְגֶּתֶת; Exod. 28: 4 and 39), two trumpets (שְׁתִּים חֹצֶרֶת; Num. 10: 1-10),⁵⁰ a jug (כָּבֵד; see Exod. 30: 18),⁵¹ basins (מְלָאָה) and מְרוֹק (Exod. 27: 3; 38: 3; Num. 4: 14),⁵² a pair of knives (מִזְבֵּחַ הַנְּחַשָּׁת),⁵³ the bronze altar (מִזְבֵּחַ הַמְּאַכְּלָתָה; Exod. 38: 30; 39: 39; on the altar of burnt offering see Exod. 27: 1-8 and 38: 1-7), and two hooks and two oblong objects that look like pipes (שְׁתִּים סְנָרוּם הַיּוּם); for the term הַיּוּם see Exod. 27: 3; 38: 3; Num. 4: 14).⁵⁴

The Artists

Six of the authors of Tabernacle drawings are known by name. Two of them drew two representations each, so that, on the whole, the authorship of eight works can be assigned to known individuals.⁵⁵ Except for one, all artists were from the priestly family.

Isaac b. Ṣadaqa of the *ytrnh* family, the artist of the engraving on the Torah case in Nablus, is known to have lived in Gaza in the 16th cent.⁵⁶ He is the only artist who did not belong to the priestly family.⁵⁷ Joseph b. Ṣadaqa the priest, the artist who made the silk hanging of the Nablus synagogue, is probably the same as Joseph b. Ṣadaqa b. Joseph of the priestly family who lived in Damascus in the early 16th cent. and was the scribe of Vatican Sam. 2.⁵⁸ Jacob b. Aaron (1840-1916; high priest 1874-1916)⁵⁹ made JRULM Sam Ms 330 and the drawing in the Percy E. Woodward Collection of Art and Archaeology of the Jefferson and Brown Museum of the Boston University School of Theology. Jacob b. Uzzi, his grandson (1899-1987; high priest 1984-1987),⁶⁰ is the author of the drawing in the W.E. Barton Collection in the Boston University Library. Abisha b. Pinḥas (1880-1960; high priest 1943-1960)⁶¹ is the artist of JRULM Sam Ms 330A and probably also of the drawing in the Völkerkundemuseum in Vienna that appears in several Samaritan publications. The extremely striking similarities between the last two works speak strongly in favour of such an assumption.⁶² And finally, Taqā b. Maṣliaḥ is the author of the drawing that was given to C. Roth and is now in the Brotherton Library in Leeds.⁶³

Synagogue Mosaics and Oil Lamps

As mentioned above, one of the drawings is believed to date from the early Muslim period, i.e., from the 7th cent. It is the drawing on parchment from the National Library of Russia which was edited and discussed by L. Vilsker.⁶⁴ If this dating is correct, the representation would have been executed only a short time after the end of the Byzantine period. Although the medium on which it was done is different, it is nevertheless reasonable to expect that the drawing on the parchment shows some similarities with the depictions found on mosaics that were discovered in synagogues in Samaria and that come from the immediately preceding Byzantine times.

Two of the newly excavated Samaritan synagogues contain mosaics that depict items which constituted part of the implements of the

Tabernacle; one of them contains also a stone on which the Holy Ark was depicted in relief; and a similar stone that may have belonged to a synagogue was found in a third location. The two synagogues with mosaics were uncovered in el-Khirbe (map coordinates 1671 : 1846) and Khirbet Samara (map coordinates 1609 : 1872), respectively;⁶⁵ in the apse of the synagogue in Khirbet Samara was found the stone with a depiction of the Holy Ark. The other stone with the relief of the Holy Ark was discovered in 1941 near the Crusader church in Kafr Fahma (map coordinates 167 : 199) in northern Samaria. In addition, an oil-lamp of the so-called Samaritan type, found in Umm Khalid (map coordinates 1375 : 1927) near Netanya and presently in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, shows the Holy Ark, the Menorah, an incense shovel and various vessels.⁶⁶ Inside the Ark appears the word יוּמָה “arise” or “advance,” an abbreviated quote of the verse “Advance, O Lord! May your enemies be scattered, and may your foes flee before you!” (Num. 10: 35), the words spoken by Moses “when the Ark was to set out.”⁶⁷ A number of other lamps of the same type show various cult objects and musical instruments.⁶⁸

It is clear from only a cursory comparison of the parchment as well as the other drawings, that there is no similarity between the Ark as portrayed on the mosaics from Samaria and the lamps on the one hand, and the Ark as depicted on the Tabernacle drawings on the other. On the latter, the Ark is a chest as described in the Bible, on the former it looks like a temple facade with a door and a curtain.⁶⁹ As to other features of the Tabernacle, the mosaic in el-Khirbe does depict the Showbread Table with vessels, the Menorah, two Shofarot and a Mahta; the mosaic in Khirbet Samara depicts jugs and other vessels, although not in the vicinity of the Holy Ark. Samaritan lamps likewise depict these objects, as noted above. All of them are to be found also on the Samaritan Tabernacle drawings, but stylistically there is no resemblance to those on the mosaics. It is therefore impossible to draw a connective line from the mosaics to the Moscow parchment and further to the drawings of the 16th and 19th/20th cent.⁷⁰

In addition to this stylistic consideration, there are the inscriptions on the mosaics and the explanatory legends on the drawings. While the seven inscriptions on the mosaic floor of el-Khirbe are all in Greek, all the Tabernacle drawings, including the presumed earliest from the 7th cent. C.E., are inscribed with Samaritan letters.⁷¹ This is a further indication that the drawings originated at a considerably later time than the mosaics.⁷²

The Torah Scroll Case “of the Images” and the Hanging in the Synagogue in Nablus

The Torah scroll case “of the images” is the most famous of the Samaritan scroll cases which are preserved in the synagogues in Holon, Nablus and on Mt. Gerizim. It was first photographed by the Palestine Exploration Fund and has since then been depicted in numerous works about the Samaritans as the case that holds the famous Abisha Scroll. Among the Samaritans it is known as **מכתב אלתמאסיל**, i.e., Arabic for “the scroll case of the images.”⁷³

Several authors have claimed that at least some of the drawings on paper were modelled after the engraving on the metal Torah scroll case in Nablus. W.E. Barton, who edited Jacob ben Aaron’s article on “The Messianic Hope of the Samaritans,” noted in the legend to the “Chart of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness” that the “symbols of the temple furniture” depicted on it are “as illustrated on the case of the Holy Scroll.”⁷⁴ At the bottom of JRULM Sam Ms 330, in Samaritan letters, appears the inscription: **זה תבנית כמו תבנית הנמצאה על ארון אשר הוא בכנסת שכם לשמנים**. The *Encyclopaedia Judaica*⁷⁵ depicts the same drawing and adds the legend: “Illustration of Temple implements and vessels from a 16th century copy of part of the engraving on the ancient Samaritan Torah scroll.” According to the English translation attached to the design that is presently in the Mary Frere Hebrew Library of Girton College, Cambridge, the drawing is a “Copy of the design on the Silver Case of the old Pentateuch at Nablus (Shechem) in the Samaritan Synagogue.”⁷⁶ It would seem that in the case of these three items it was the Samaritans who furnished this information to the buyers of the works.

Purvis believes that it is possible that the drawings by Jacob ben Aaron as well as that by Jacob ben Uzzi were derived from the engraving on the metal Torah case. Differences between the drawings "may reflect alternative traditions (or opinions) within the Samaritan community on the appearance and placement of certain cultic objects within the shrine or, what is more likely, simply liberties taken by the artists."⁷⁷

Furthermore, a particularly close resemblance exists between the engraving on the Torah case and Valmadonna Trust 20e (I). Notable is also the depiction of the priestly garment on the two charts by Jacob ben Aaron and the one in Moscow; in all three cases the garment has a characteristic shape and may be represented by its sleeves,⁷⁸ as it does on Valmadonna Trust 20e (II).

One may be tempted to conclude that the Torah case in Nablus is in fact the model for all other drawings. But against such a conclusion stands not only the fact that the hanging in the same synagogue is dated 12/13 years before the Torah case, but also the differences between the various representations. The latter may of course be explained along the lines suggested by Purvis. The avowed model character of the Torah case may simply be a means of attributing special status to the drawings because of their affinity with the engraving on the case that houses the most revered scroll of the Samaritans. If, on the other hand, the present scroll case is indeed a replica of an earlier one that was taken from the Samaritans by the Arabs as Gaster was told,⁷⁹ the engraving could have served as model.

It should be noted that the representations on the metal case in Nablus and those on paper have been confused by several authors. Gaster in his book *The Samaritans* prints as pl. 4 the depiction of JRULM Sam Ms 330 and as pl. 5 the Torah metal case which allegedly served as its model.⁸⁰ However, on the case on pl. 5 there are no designs of the vessels; Gaster must have had the Torah Scroll case of 1522 in mind. Leveen in his book *The Hebrew Bible in Art*, referring to Gaster's plates 4 and 5, conflates the latter's description. He speaks of "a rough drawing made in blue chalk upon the metal case."⁸¹ Ferber, who reproduces the correct metal case, albeit with

right and left sides reversed and the bottom cut off, speaks of “a copper and bronze Torah case,” although Gaster specified “copper (or brass).”⁸²

The donor of the case, Jacob b. Abraham of the *pwqh* family, was possibly the same person that is mentioned in the *Tolidah* for the year 910 A.H., i.e., 1504-1505 C.E. He is said to have done much good, and was therefore called “king of Israel” because he played the same role in the time of the פָּנָוָתָה as did the king of Israel in the הַמִּזְבֵּחַ. One of the many scribes that added to the Chronicle, noted: “And it was he who donated the copper case on which the Tabernacle is depicted and which is to be found in the synagogue in Shechem; and it is of gold, silver and copper, and it is from his property.”⁸³

As to the hanging in the synagogue in Nablus, it was donated by Jacob b. Abraham b. Isaac of the שְׁנָאָרִיָּה family from Damascus, in 915 A.H., i.e., 1509/10 C.E.⁸⁴ L.A. Mayer identified the curved “structure” at the bottom as the representation of a *mīhrāb* as it is found in mosques.⁸⁵ In his opinion, this is a sign of the weakening of the Samaritan community. However, the hanging is the only Samaritan depiction of the Tabernacle implements that includes a *mīhrāb*. Neither the almost contemporary engraving on the scroll case in Nablus nor any other drawing from later centuries show a similar configuration.

The Moscow Parchment

If the early date of the Moscow parchment,⁸⁷ viz. the 7th cent. C.E., were correct, it would make this drawing almost nine hundred years older than any of the other extant representations. And in fact it would be the oldest Samaritan manuscript in existence.

According to Vilsker, in the left upper quadrant of the drawing, the following text appears:⁸⁸ (1) *tbnyt mšknh qdšh 'l hytwb 't'st* (2) *bšnt bl lmmlkt yšm['ylyh]*, i.e., “Picture of the Holy Tabernacle at a standstill. Made in the year thirty-two of the rule of the Ishmaelites.”⁸⁹ The drawing would therefore date from 32 A.H. or 652/653 C.E. Unfortunately, on the reproductions available to me,⁹⁰ this text cannot be

seen. Noteworthy is the form in which the date is given, viz. בָּי instead of the usual לְבָי. However, it must be admitted that occasionally this form of numeral does appear in Samaritan manuscripts.

Also noteworthy is the lack of any similarity between the drawings on this Moscow parchment and the depictions on the mosaics found in the synagogues of el-Khirbe and Khirbet Samara as well as the reliefs on two stones and the lamp mentioned above. Moreover, the inscriptions in synagogues of the Byzantine period are all in Greek as opposed to Samaritan script on the drawings. Only gradually did the Samaritans adopt the habit of using Samaritan.⁹¹ It would be surprising if they had completely changed from one language and script to the other only 16/17 years after the Muslim conquest. Thus, the use of the Samaritan script on the drawing may be an additional indication that it dates from a much later time. It is true that the two synagogues mentioned above were dated to the 4th/5th cent., whereas the Moscow parchment is said to date from the 7th cent. However, it is hardly to be expected that so soon after the end of the Byzantine rule no traces of the earlier style were left.

Furthermore, the early date of 32 A.H. for the parchment drawing is excluded on linguistic grounds. The hybrid language in which the legends on the drawing are written, was not yet in existence at that time; it developed only three hundred years later.

Finally, there is a strong resemblance between the Moscow parchment drawing and the later depictions, on paper, from the 19th/20th cent. Even in the faint reproduction available, the similarity between the representation of the priestly garments, the trumpets and the flesh hooks on the Moscow sample on the one hand, and on Jacob b. Aaron's drawings as well as on Valmadonna Trust 20e (I) on the other, is very close. On the other hand, definite differences also exist.

The writing material indicates as *terminus ante quem* the 15th or early 16th cent. Samaritan manuscripts after the early 16th cent. are on paper, rather than parchment.⁹² It may well be that the Moscow parchment was drawn around the same time as the hanging and the Torah scroll case in the synagogue in Nablus were made. It is con-

ceivable that the original year was ל'ת, i.e., 930 A.H. or 1523/24 C.E. Given the state of preservation of the manuscript, the ת may be illegible, and the ל may have been misread for a כ by Vilsker, the two letters being similar in Samaritan script. Of course, without examining the original this must remain speculation.⁹³

Similarities With Jewish Tabernacle Representations

In trying to date the tradition of Samaritan Tabernacle illustrations, their similarity with Jewish representations has been noted a long time ago.⁹⁴ Both Jews and Samaritans depict largely the same objects and both provide explanations next to the objects on the drawings.⁹⁵ The Samaritans have sometimes furnished English and Jewish Hebrew translations, either next to those in Samaritan script⁹⁶ or on a separate page attached to the drawing.⁹⁷ Evidently this was done for the benefit of non-Samaritans who acquired these drawings.

An important difference between the Jewish and the Samaritan depictions is the purpose for which they were made. The Jewish representations are illustrations of Bible manuscripts, whereas the Samaritan drawings were and are used independent of any manuscript; they are items of religious art in their own right to be hung on the wall. Most are considerably larger than pages of books. And in fact, there are no illuminated Samaritan Bibles.⁹⁸ Another difference is that most Jewish illustrations of the Tabernacle (or temple) consist of two pages over which the different implements are spread. The Samaritan drawings always depict the Tabernacle and all the implements on one page. Moreover, the Samaritans added certain features which underline specific Samaritan beliefs. These are the list of high priests that served at the Tabernacle with a note that God hid the Tabernacle in the days of Uzzi, and the prayer that God may restore it; fire depicted on the altar; the staff of Moses in the Holy of Holies;⁹⁹ and the trumpets.¹⁰⁰

C. Roth, in 1953, surmised that the Samaritan as well as the strikingly similar Jewish representations of the sanctuary and its vessels may be based on Biblical illuminations from “perhaps before or at the

very beginning of the Christian era.”¹⁰¹ He reasoned that the similarity cannot “be wholly accidental;” but due to the “intense opposition” between Jews and Samaritans neither would have imitated the other; when there are similarities, they are much more likely to be explained on the basis of a common source that antedates the schism and the acute rivalry.¹⁰²

S. Ferber also traces the origins of Samaritan and Jewish depictions of the Tabernacle back to early times. He believes that the scroll case in Nablus¹⁰³ is “formally related by its schematic, diagrammatic, non-illusionistic treatment of the same theme” to the fragmentary illustration in the “First Leningrad Bible,”¹⁰⁴ written in Cairo in 930 C.E. He then surmises that the engraving “suggests a tenth- or eleventh-century prototype.”¹⁰⁵ And again he notes: “The unifying quality in the Leningrad Bible and the Samaritan examples,¹⁰⁶ only three from many of this type, is the diagrammatic, non-spatial schematism of the representations with their emphases upon the depiction of the cult objects. A type of ritualistic literalism appears to be at the root of this form of illustration—a form which can perhaps be associated with an earlier Syro-Palestinian tradition.”¹⁰⁷ Later in his article he suggests “that the image of the Torah case represents the oldest extant tradition for Temple/Tabernacle depictions.”¹⁰⁸ Although he adds immediately after: “I could not even begin to suggest a date for the origin of this tradition,” on the next page he ventures to date it, after all, when he says: “This type of illustration may be based upon a Palestinian tradition of the third century A.D.”

It is not necessary for the present purpose to address the question of the development of Jewish Tabernacle/temple images. Suffice it to say that numerous scholars have refuted Roth’s theories about the filiation of early Jewish art and later manuscript illustrations.¹⁰⁹ It is also unlikely that the line drawn by Ferber from the early mosaics in Palestine, via Egyptian manuscripts of the 10th cent., to the modern drawings is correct. Following Roth,¹¹⁰ Ferber and others¹¹¹ have seen a relationship between the 6th cent. mosaic of the synagogue in Beth-Alpha with the 10th cent. Egyptian manuscript

now in St. Petersburg. Since the artists of the Beth-Alpha mosaic, Marinos and his son Anina, made a mosaic in Beth-Shean where there may have been a Samaritan synagogue, it is even more tempting to look for a connection. And in fact the two bird-like figures on the roof of the Ark from the Beth-Alpha mosaic are reminiscent of the representation of the cherubim on Samaritan drawings.

Nevertheless, for the following reasons a connection is to be ruled out. What is depicted in the illustration of the St. Petersburg Bible¹¹² differs from the Ark on the mosaics. On the former, the Ark contains the two tablets of the Law,¹¹³ whereas on the latter a door is depicted. Apart from the slight resemblance of the bird-like figures in Beth-Alpha with the cherubim on some Samaritan drawings, there is no similarity between the mosaics, Samaritans or Jewish, and the St. Petersburg illustrations on the one hand, and the Samaritan images on the other, as already noted above. The similarities that do exist between Samaritan and Jewish drawings of the sanctuary implements stem no doubt from the common biblical source and maybe also from cross-fertilization.

Cross-fertilization between the two traditions would have had to take place in the Near East; it is unlikely that Spanish, French, Germanic and Italian illustrations would have influenced Samaritan art, at least before modern times. Apart from MS II, 17 in the Public Library in St. Petersburg, there is in the same library another manuscript which depicts the Tabernacle, i.e., MS II, 49; it probably dates from the same time.¹¹⁴ Two other manuscripts from Syria or Babylon are British Library MS Or. 1467 and MS Or. 2363; they are thought to have been written in the 11th or 12th cent.¹¹⁵ Neither St. Petersburg MS II, 49 nor the last mentioned manuscripts are comparable to the Samaritan images.¹¹⁶ But even in the case of St. Petersburg MS II, 17, the only parallel feature is the "diagrammatic, non-spatial schematism of the representations with their emphases upon the depiction of the cult objects."¹¹⁷ If there was cross-fertilization, it must have taken place at a much later time than the 10th cent.

On the whole, the similarities between the various Samaritan depictions are much greater than those between the latter and Jewish designs. Although no two Samaritan representations are exactly alike, there is a basic uniformity in appearance that identifies all of them as belonging to the same artistic tradition and sets them off from similar Jewish designs.

Conclusion

The drawings of the Mosaic Tabernacle and its implements on metal, cloth, parchment and paper are the main expression of Samaritan representational art in modern times. They are pictorial statements about central Samaritan beliefs. At the present state of our knowledge, it is not possible to determine the time when Samaritans first began to make these works. No drawings exist that are older than the 16th cent. C.E. For the reasons discussed, the Moscow parchment cannot date from the 7th cent. Rather, its similarities with 19th/20th cent. representations place it in modern times.

Furthermore, there is no stylistic resemblance between the designs found in synagogue mosaics in Samaria and images of cult objects on oil lamps on the one hand, and the Tabernacle drawings from later periods on the other. By the time the latter were made, the memory of the Byzantine artistic expressions was no longer present to the Samaritans. Only in the last several decades have finds and excavations by archaeologists uncovered the earlier creations.

Similarities with Jewish designs exist in both genres, i.e., lamps and mosaics from the Byzantine period as well as parchment and paper drawings from modern times. It stands to reason that mutual cross-fertilization took place in both instances, but, for the post-Byzantine tradition of images, it is impossible to trace the point in time and place at which it occurred.

An important difference exists with regard to the function of the drawings in the two traditions. In Judaism, they were used to illustrate biblical manuscripts, whereas in Samaritanism they are works of religious art in their own right. The Samaritan Tabernacle drawings are visual symbols of the basic Samaritan theologumena that the

Mosaic Tabernacle was the only legitimate sanctuary in the past and that it will be restored at the end of times.

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¹ See Pummer, "Hidden Vessels" and "Temple" in Crown, Pummer, Tal, eds., *Companion* 122-123 and 229-231. For detailed examinations see the works by Kippenberg, Collins and Dexinger quoted below.

² In Abū 'l-Fath's chronicle it is said that "in the second year (after the Israelites' entrance into Canaan) Joshua built the Temple (in Arabic *hykl*) on Mt. Gerizim and put the Tabernacle (in Arabic *mshkn*) in it" (Stenhouse, *Kitāb* 28). Similarly the Samaritan *Book of Joshua*, ch. 24, end, although instead of *hykl* it says *knysht*, and instead of *mshkn*, *hykl*. One of the drawings to be discussed here, includes in its title the statement that Joshua set up the Tabernacle on Mt. Gerizim (Leeds, Brotherton Library). Although these are late sources, the tradition goes back to much earlier times. Josephus recounts that during the time of Pontius Pilate, a Samaritan who promised to reveal the hidden vessels on Mt. Gerizim, claimed that Moses had deposited them there (Ant. 18: 85). On the role of Moses in this passage see Dexinger, *Taheb* (1978), 326.

³ Abū 'l-Fath, *Kitāb* 40-41. Cf. also the Samaritan Book of Joshua, ch. 43 (text in Juynboll, *Chronicon*; Engl. transl. in Crane, *The Samaritan Chronicle*).

⁴ Stenhouse, *Kitāb* 43. For the disappearance of the tabernacle in the time of Uzzi, see also the *Tolidah* (Neubauer, "Chronique samaritaine" 398 [text] and 433 [transl.]); Bowman, *Transcript 11x*; Chronicle Adler (Adler and Séligson, "Une nouvelle chronique," in *REJ* 44 [1902], 205-206); and Gaster, "The Chain" III, 132 (text) and I, 495 (transl.). In Abū 'l-Fath's chronicle occurs a second account of the hiding of the vessels, in this case, by the High Priest 'Aqbīa in

the time of Nebuchadnezzar (see Stenhouse, *Kitāb* 63); it is a doublet that probably came from a different source used by Abū ‘l-Faṭḥ (cf. Stenhouse, *Kitāb* [1980], Vol. I, Part I, Chapter 6).

⁵ See above n. 2.

⁶ In all 21 places of the Deuteronomic phrase “the place which the Lord your God will choose (**רְכָב יְהוָה**),” the Samaritan Pentateuch reads “the place which the Lord your God has chosen (**רְכָב**).”

⁷ *Ant.* 11: 322-324, 13: 74 and 256; *Bell.* 1: 63.

⁸ See now my article “Samaritans” in the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Archeology in the Near East*, vol. IV.

⁹ No final report was yet published since the excavations are still under way.

¹⁰ See p. 87 in Stenhouse, *Kitāb*: During the time of the Jewish king Simon, the Jews “demolished the altar and the Temple which ‘Abdāl the High Priest had built.” With Gaster, Stenhouse surmises that this “king” was “the famous Simon the Just (142-135 B.C.) the Jewish High Priest praised by Ben Sira” (*Kitāb* XXVIII, n. 407).

¹¹ Unless the destruction of God’s House in *Tibat Marqe* refers to the destruction of this temple by John Hyrcanus (so Kippenberg, *Garizim* 244-245).

¹² For other expressions see Crown, “Art of the Samaritans,” in Crown, Pummer, Tal, eds., *Companion* 29-32. In the last years, Samaritans have depicted religious subjects, including persons; so, e.g., the drawing that depicts the pilgrimage in the 14th cent., which was designed by Menashe Tsedaka, is dated Oct. 16, 1983, and was an insert in an issue of the Samaritan bi-weekly periodical *A.B.*

¹³ In his articles “Two Samaritan Drawings of the Tabernacle in the Boston University Library,” and “The Tabernacle in Samaritan Iconography and Thought.” See also I. Kalimi and J.D. Purvis on “The Hiding of the Tabernacle Vessels in Jewish and Samaritan Literature.”

¹⁴ *Garizim* 234-254.

¹⁵ “The Hidden Vessels in Samaritan Tradition.” See also A. Zeron, “Einige Bemerkungen zu M.F. Collins ‘The Hidden Vessels in Samaritan Traditions’;” and C.R. Koester, *The Dwelling of God* 48-58, with

a chart on p. 49 that compares Jewish and Samaritan traditions. Unfortunately, Koester seems to have been unaware of Dexinger's contribution.

¹⁶ *Der Taheb*; see the Index under "Zelt, Heiliges" and "Geräte (Tempel, Kult)."

¹⁷ "The Hiding of the Tabernacle Vessels in Jewish and Samaritan Literature."

¹⁸ For details, the two articles by Purvis, quoted above, should be consulted.

¹⁹ Only five of the drawings have a title as does the hanging. The drawing in the William E. Barton Collection in Boston University has only a title in English: "The picture of the Tabernacle."

²⁰ The phrase **תְּבִנַת הַמִשְׁכָן** occurs in Exod. 25: 9.

²¹ Moscow parchment; this description appears within the body of the drawing, not at the top or bottom. Vilsker translates **לְהַיְתָה** **עַל** with "at a standstill" and includes **אֲתָעֵשֶת** with the next line, i.e., "made in the year . . ." ("On an Illustrated Samaritan Work" 76; *Manuel* 102).

²² Hanging in Nablus.

²³ JRULM Sam Ms 330.

²⁴ JRULM Sam Ms 330A; at the bottom of the page.

²⁵ Boston University, Percy E. Woodward Collection.

²⁶ **טַל שְׁכָם** is additional in the Samaritan Pentateuch in Deut. 11: 30.

²⁷ Leeds, Brotherton Library. The photographs in the publications by Asher b. Maṣlīḥ are accompanied by legends that do not seem to be part of the drawing itself. In *The Samaritans* the legend reads "The picture of Temple of Moses which built it Joshua over Gerizim mount" (sic); in **הַשּׂוֹרְנוּגִים וְהַגִּימִם** it reads **צְרוֹתֹת כָּלִי הַמִשְׁכָן אַهֲל מַעַד**, "pictures of (the) vessels of the Tabernacle, Tent of Meeting."

²⁸ Nablus Torah scroll case; JRULM Sam Ms 330; Boston University, Percy E. Woodward Collection; Cambridge, Girton College.

²⁹ On this see Purvis, "Two Samaritan Drawings" 110.

³⁰ On the Ark are sometimes depicted the tablets of testimony, **לְחוֹתֹת הַעֲדוֹת** (Exod. 31: 18; 32: 15; 34: 29); so Cambridge, Girton College.

³¹ Valmadonna Trust 20e (II).

³² In the following, all texts are quoted, except the one on the drawing in the Völkerkundemuseum in Vienna, since the photograph available to me is not clear enough.

³³ In the Samaritan Pentateuch, the name, albeit of a different individual, is spelt קָרְבָּן (Num. 34: 22). In the Samaritan Chronicles (*Tolidah*, *Chronicle Neubauer*, and Gaster, “The Chain”), the same spelling as on this and other drawings appears.

³⁴ Moscow parchment. The text is only partially legible and was reconstructed by Vilsker. Since Aaron is also regarded as one of the “guardians of the sanctuary,” Vilsker’s reconstruction may be incorrect.

³⁵ For the phrase שְׁמֵרִי מִשְׁמָרַת הַקְּרֻבָּה see Num. 3: 28, 32. Cf. also Lev. 8: 35; Num. 1: 53; 3: 7-8; 3: 38; 18: 4-5; 31: 30, 47.

³⁶ Torah Scroll Case in the Samaritan synagogue in Nablus. The semi-colons in the Hebrew text indicate the Samaritan sign of abbreviation.

³⁷ Montserrat, Ms. Or. 145.

³⁸ Valmadonna Trust 20e (I).

³⁹ JRULM Sam Ms 330.

⁴⁰ JRULM Sam Ms 330A.

⁴¹ Boston, Boston University, Percy E. Woodward Collection.

⁴² Boston, Boston University, William E. Barton Collection.

⁴³ Leeds, Brotherton Library.

⁴⁴ Cambridge, Girton College.

⁴⁵ See the *Tolidah* (Neubauer, “Chronique samaritaine” 397-398 [text] and 432-433 [transl.]); *Chronicle Adler* (Adler and Séligson, “Une nouvelle chronique,” in *REJ* 44 [1902], 201-205); Gaster, “The Chain” in *Studies* III, 131-132 (text) and I, 494 (transl.); Abū ‘l-Fath counts six high priests for the period of Divine Favour, viz. Eleazar, Pinḥas, Abisha, Shishi, Beḥqi and Uzzi (see the translation by Stenhouse, *Kitāb* 39). In none of these lists does the name of Ithamar occur. For a discussion of the Samaritan list of high priests and the role of Ithamar see Kippenberg, *Garizim* 60-68 and 176-180.

⁴⁶ Stenhouse, *Kitāb* 39.

⁴⁷ Purvis, discussing the drawing from the Barton Collection, thinks they “are probably receptacles for the oil for the lamps” (“Two Samaritan Drawings” 111). However, on other drawings (see, e.g., Valmadonna Trust I) they appear as elongated objects rather than receptacles.

⁴⁸ Cf. Purvis, “Two Samaritan Drawings” 114-113.

⁴⁹ Often the door is depicted in the section below, i.e., outside, the Tabernacle proper.

⁵⁰ On the importance of the trumpets in the Samaritan tradition see Purvis, “Two Samaritan Drawings” 115-114.

⁵¹ See Purvis, “Two Samaritan Drawings” 113.

⁵² For a discussion see Purvis, “Two Samaritan Drawings” 113.

⁵³ The drawing in the Percy E. Woodward Collection depicts a second pair of smaller knives, called בְּנֵי מִת.

⁵⁴ On בְּנֵי מִת see Purvis, “Two Samaritan Drawings” 113.

⁵⁵ For biographical information on them see the following footnotes and the references cited there.

⁵⁶ Cf. Crown, “Studies” IV, no. 282. See also the discussion below.

⁵⁷ The *ytrnh* family, now extinct, once was a large family with branches in Nablus, Ramla, Damascus and Egypt (A.B. 625 [25.12. 1994], p. 40).

⁵⁸ See Crown, “Studies” IV, no. 409.

⁵⁹ See Pummer, *Samaritan Marriage Contracts* I, pp. 149-150.

⁶⁰ See *Personalities* 256.

⁶¹ See Pummer, *Samaritan Marriage Contracts* I, pp. 141-142.

⁶² The most conspicuous similarities are the decorative design inside the Holy of Holies (although the drawing in the Percy E. Woodward Collection in Boston has a similar design, the other features differ), the unique shape of the Menora, that of the Laver and the priestly garment, the placement of the objects which is the same in both instances as well as the liberal use of a rosette-like design.

⁶³ He was a copyist, born in 1317 A.H., i.e., 1899/1900 C.E., according to Kahle (“Die Samaritaner” no. 32). According to the census of 1908 (Ryl Sam MS 328), he was 11 years old in that year, i.e., he would have been born in 1897. This latter date is confirmed by

an Arabic colophon written by him in August 1930 C.E. He notes that he finished copying the prayers for Shemini Aşeret on 28 Rabi‘ II, 1349, and adds: “And at the time of writing this service book I married the daughter of Jamil b. Murjān, Danafī, my age being 33 and her age 17, and the celebration was the night of Monday, 23 Rabi‘ I, 1349 H” (Robertson, *Catalogue II*, col. 293). Taqā’s father, Maşliaḥ b. Pinħas, was high priest from 1932 to 1943. Jamil b. Murjān is no. 65a in Kahle’s list; he was born in 1289 A.H., i.e., 1872/73 C.E., and had no children yet in 1909; when his unnamed daughter was born in 1913 he was 41 (or 42) years old.

⁶⁴ Vilsker, “On an Illustrated Samaritan Work.”

⁶⁵ For colour reproductions of the mosaics see *Qadmoniot*, Vol. 25, No. 3-4 (99-100) (1992), front and back cover, and F. Manns and E. Alliata, eds., *Early Christianity in Context* pls. I-IV after p. 240.

⁶⁶ See V. Sussman, “Samaritan Cult Symbols as Illustrated on Oil Lamps from the Byzantine Period,” 133, fig. 1, and Magen, “Samaritan Synagogues” 225, fig. 47.

⁶⁷ This allusion to the Tabernacle reflects the importance that the sanctuary had in the Samaritan tradition.

⁶⁸ In addition to the articles cited above, see also V. Sussman, “Samaritan Lamps of the Third-Fourth Centuries A.D.” “Samaritan Oil Lamps from Apollonia-Arsuf;” “Symbolic and Representational Art. Lamps,” and “Lamps,” in Crown, Pummer, Tal, eds., *Companion* 32-33 and 146-147.

⁶⁹ On the similarity of synagogue facades to late antiquity Roman temple facades see Y. Tsafrir, “The Byzantine Setting and its Influence on Ancient Synagogues” 147-157, in particular pp. 148 and 149; and B. Narkiss, “Pagan, Christian, and Jewish Elements in the Art of Ancient Synagogues” 183-188, in particular p. 184. In both articles Jewish synagogues are the subject, but the same applies no doubt to Samaritan synagogues.

⁷⁰ See below.

⁷¹ Only on some oil lamps from the Byzantine period does Samaritan script appear; see V. Sussman, “Samaritan Cult Symbols as Illustrated on Oil Lamps from the Byzantine Period.”

⁷² For further discussion see below.

⁷³ See A.B. 344-345 (2.10.1983), p. 30, and A.B. 625 (25.12.1994), p. 38.

⁷⁴ P. 295.

⁷⁵ Vol. 14 (1971), col. 739, fig. 5.

⁷⁶ H. Loewe, *Catalogue* 47.

⁷⁷ "Tabernacle" 227; cf. also "Two Samaritan Drawings" 106-105 and 118.

⁷⁸ See Purvis, "Two Samaritan Drawings" 115. It should be noted, though, that the shape of the object may not represent sleeves which are, in any case, not mentioned in Exod. 28: 1-43, but only by Josephus in *Ant.* 3: 162, as Purvis noted. It may well be that the artist rendered the two halves of the front of the vestment that, on other drawings, resembles a coat; the horizontal bar below the **מִנְתָּחָה** could then be the sleeves. However, in JRULM Sam Ms 330, the horizontal bar is inscribed **לְבַנְתָּחָה**, i.e., the breast-pouch of the high priest (cf. Exod. 25: 7).

⁷⁹ *Samaritans* 193-194, although Gaster wrote that the "copy (was) made in the seventeenth century."

⁸⁰ *Samaritans* 193.

⁸¹ Leveen, *Hebrew Bible* 67. "Blue chalk" is taken from Gaster's description of the drawings on JRULM Sam Ms 330. In reality, the drawing is multi-coloured with blue, yellow, red, green, and brown colours.

⁸² Ferber, "Temple" 31. Moreover, Ferber gives no source for his claim that "Among the Samaritans, an age-old, persistent legend maintains that the Torah case we have been discussing is an exact representation of the Temple/Tabernacle with all of its attendant appurtenances" ("Temple" 37).

⁸³ See Neubauer, "Chronique Samaritaine" 419 (text) and 464 (translation).

⁸⁴ As quoted by B. Tsedaka in A.B. 625 (25.12.1994), p. 38; the passage is not in Neubauer's edition nor in the manuscript owned by the priestly family in Nablus. Tsedaka concludes that Jacob

b. Abraham donated the case to the synagogue in Shechem in 1504-1505 (*A.B.* 625 [25.12.1994], p. 38). However, according to the dedicatory inscription on the case, Isaac b. Ṣadaqa of the *ytrnh* family made the case in 1522, i.e., 17 or 18 years after it is supposed to have been donated.

⁸⁵ For a description and a photograph see Mayer, “A Sixteenth Century Samaritan Hanging,” as well as the unsigned article “פָרוּכַת (מִסְךָ) הַקְדוּמָה בְתַבֵּל נְמַצָּאת בְשֻׁכְם בְּסֶכֶנְתָּה כְּלִיה” in *A.B.* 405 (16.3.1986), 6-8. The date given in the latter article is based on the reading, in the sixth line of the inscription, בְשִׁנְתָּה חֲמִשָּׁה וּעַשְׁ (רַיִם), i.e., 925 A.H.; however, the ١ before עַשְׁ is not in the original; Mayer correctly reads בְשִׁנְתָּה חֲמִשָּׁה עַשְׁ (א), i.e., 915 A.H. The article in *A.B.* explains the dedication לְמִכְתָּב הַקְדוּמָה to mean that the hanging was made “for the Abisha Scroll.” See also Strugnell, “Quelques inscriptions” 577. However, J.D. Whiting provides the legend: “This silken curtain . . . is used in the synagogue to hang in front of the scroll chests” (“The Last Israelitish Blood Sacrifice” 11). Today, the curtain is still in the synagogue in Nablus (letter from B. Tsedaka, dated Dec. 17, 1996) while all other valuable objects have been removed to safes in the synagogue on Mt. Gerizim. Already in 1986 the hanging was in danger of disintegrating because during most of the year it was kept folded in a moist environment (see “פָרוּכַת” 6).

⁸⁶ Mayer, “A Sixteenth Century Samaritan Hanging” 113.

⁸⁷ Vilsker restored the page from four fragments (“On an Illustrated Samaritan Work” 73).

⁸⁸ Vilsker reconstructed the text with the help of JRULM Sam Ms 330A (“On an Illustrated Samaritan Work” 75 n. 5).

⁸⁹ “On an Illustrated Samaritan Work” 76 (see above, section “Title”). In his work *Samaritjanskii jazyk* and its French translation, *Manuel*, Vilsker gives the text in Samaritan characters and adds a transliteration, the pronunciation and a translation as well as a philological commentary. The text reads thus: 1. תְבִנְתָה מִשְׁכָנָה 2. קְרִישָׁה עַל הַיּוֹב אֶתְעָשָׂת. In his article, the שׁ at the end of line one are not in brackets, nor are they in *Samaritjanskii jazyk*. In the transliteration in the *Manuel*, the second

line ends in the word *yšm' [l]*, instead of *yšm' [ylyh]* as in the article and in the Russian *Samaritjanskii jazyk*. It would seem then that the reading in Samaritan characters in both the original Russian and the French translation, is the one to be retained.

⁹⁰ Neither a microfilm nor the photograph in Vilsker's article show the text; this is no doubt due to the poor preservation of the drawing and the quality of the reproductions. No original photograph could be obtained from the National Library of Moscow.

⁹¹ Cf. Magen, "Samaritan Synagogues" 227: the complete absence of Samaritan inscriptions from the 4th/5th cent. on Mt. Gerizim may "indicate that the inscriptions in Samaritan script discovered in a number of sites date to a later period: the end of the Byzantine period, the Islamic period or the Middle Ages, when Greek script was no longer used by the Samaritan community."

⁹² All the manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris, e.g., that date between the 12th and 15th cent. are on parchment, whereas those from the 15th to 20th cent. are on paper (see Rothschild, *Catalogue* 20). Likewise, of all the extant ketubot only the oldest, dating from 1510 C.E., is on parchment; those from the 18th to 20th cent. are on paper. A.D. Crown also confirms that the 16th cent. is the last in which the Samaritans used parchment (private communication of Feb. 1996).

⁹³ For the use of a one plus פ to express hundreds, see Macuch, *Grammatik des samaritanischen Hebräisch* 10.

⁹⁴ There are also illustrations in Christian Bible manuscripts which are similar to the Samaritan drawings. An example is fol. 325 of Cod. 10 in the Nationalbibliothek in Vienna, from the early 12th cent. (see p. 22 and pl. 78 in Bloch, *Nachwirkungen*; and *Enc Jud* 15 [1972], 987, fig. 8). However, it is unlikely that there was cross-fertilization between Samaritans and Christians in this instance.

⁹⁵ Not all Jewish representations are annotated. For a thorough discussion of the implements in Jewish miniatures see Nordström, "Some Miniatures in Hebrew Bibles."

⁹⁶ As on JRULM Sam Ms 330A and on Boston University, William E. Barton Collection (English and Jewish Hebrew).

⁹⁷ As in the case of Girton College.

⁹⁸ The closest approximation is an early 20th cent. Torah scroll (ca. 1930), written by Jacob b. Uzzi, and now in the library of the University of Sydney; in it the text of *Exodus* is arranged, in imitation of medieval Hebrew micrography, in such a way that it forms the shapes of “a candelabrum, showbread and the table, an altar, and the Tabernacle itself” (Crown, *Hebrew Manuscripts* 20; see also his “Art of the Samaritans” 30). Since Jacob b. Uzzi is the author of one of the drawings of the Tabernacle, it would be interesting to compare the drawing with the micrographic representations in the Sydney scroll. Unfortunately, no photograph of the pertinent columns of the latter was available to me.

⁹⁹ The only Samaritan representation that does not show the staff of Moses in the Holy of Holies is the silk hanging. Purvis enumerates also the jar of manna (“Tabernacle” 235); but it is present also in Jewish designs in accordance with Exod. 16: 33-34.

¹⁰⁰ According to the Arabic Book of Joshua, the high priest sounded the trumpet upon completion of the burnt-offering in the morning; for the references see Purvis, “Tabernacle” 235-236.

¹⁰¹ “Jewish Antecedents” 36. For a critique of this article see Thérèse Metzger, “Les objets du culte”, particularly pp. 399-401.

¹⁰² “Jewish Antecedents” 36.

¹⁰³ With M. Gaster, S. Ferber dates it to the 17th cent.

¹⁰⁴ St. Petersburg, Public Library, Ms. II, 17.

¹⁰⁵ “The Temple of Solomon” 31-32.

¹⁰⁶ His second Samaritan example is JRULM Sam Ms 330.

¹⁰⁷ “Temple” 32-33.

¹⁰⁸ “Temple” 37.

¹⁰⁹ See in particular Thérèse Metzger, “Les objets du culte” pp. 399-401, as well as J. Gutmann, *Temple of Solomon* 125; *Sacred Images*, book IX, p. 440, and book XVII, pp. 235-237 and 253-254; review of K. Weitzmann and H.L. Kessler, *The Frescoes of the Dura Synagogue and Christian Art in Speculum* 67 (1992), 502-504. My thanks to Prof. Gutmann for these references.

¹¹⁰ “Jewish Antecedents” 28-29.

¹¹¹ E.g., Nordström, "Temple Miniatures" 46.

¹¹² The page is depicted in a number of articles. One of the best colour reproductions can be found in B. Narkiss, *Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts* Plate 1A.

¹¹³ See M. Metzger, "Quelques caractères" 207 and Pl. II, figs. 2 and 3. To the two tablets are attached trapezoids as was usual with writing tablets. Metzger thinks the tablets could also have been decorations of the door.

¹¹⁴ So T. Metzger, "Objets" 404.

¹¹⁵ Cf. T. Metzger, "Objets" 404.

¹¹⁶ Both are marginal illustrations. MS Or. 1467 represents the vessels offered to the Tabernacle by the tribal chiefs as described in Num. 7: 12-86 and appears next to the text of Num. 7: 42. MS Or. 2363 depicts the tablets of the Law next to the text of Exod. 20: 13.

¹¹⁷ Ferber, "The Temple of Solomon" 32-33.

Inventory

The inventory contains a list of all known drawings on parchment and paper as well as the engraving on the metal Torah case and the embroidered hanging in the synagogue in Nablus.

Wherever possible, the following data are provided: present location; catalogue number; artist; donor; date of origin; material; colors; dimensions; and secondary literature.

1. Moscow, Russian State Library,¹ F. 173. II, No. 175

32 A.H. = 652/653 C.E. (?)²

parchment

colored, green and red

670 × 553 mm

¹ Formerly V.I. Lenin State Library.

² See the discussion in the text.

L.H. Vilsker, “Ob odnom samaritjanskom izobrazitel’nom pamiatnike v gosudarstvennoi biblioteke SSSR imeni VI. Lenina” [“On an Illustrated Samaritan Work in the V.I. Lenin State Library of the USSR”], 1971 (Russian).

L.H. Vilsker, *Samaritjanskii yazyk [Samaritan Language]*, 1974, pp. 83-84.

A.B. 248 (15.11.1979), pp. 1-7 (ill.).

L.H. Vilsker, *Manuel d’araméen Samaritain*, 1981, pp. 101-102.

2. Nablus, Samaritan synagogue, hanging

915 A.H. = 1509/10 C.E.

red silk, embroidered with silver thread

238 × 183 cm

donor: Jacob b. Abraham b. Isaac of the *mtwhyh* family from Damascus

artist: Joseph b. Šadaqa the priest

J.D. Whiting, “The Last Israelitish Blood Sacrifice,” 1920, p. 11 (ill.).

H. Glaser, “Die Samaritaner,” 1926, p. 7 (ill.).

L.A. Mayer, “A Sixteenth Century Samaritan Hanging,” 1947 (Hebrew).

L.H. Vilsker, “On an Illustrated Samaritan Work,” 1971, 78 n.

11: the Samaritan section of the State Public Library in St. Petersburg has a copy of the hanging with the faulty date 815 A.H.

פרוכת (מס' שומרונית משנת 1518, הקדומה בתבל, נמצאת בשכם בבסכנת קליה in A.B. 405 (16.3.1986), 6-8.

3. Nablus, Samaritan Synagogue,³ Torah Scroll Case

³ After the break-in on March 21, 1995, when two ancient Pentateuch scrolls were stolen, this scroll case, together with other valuable objects, was transferred to safes in the Samaritan synagogue on Mt. Gerizim (letter of B. Tsedaka from December 17, 1996).

Sha'bān 928 A.H. = June 26-July 25, 1522

brass, inlaid with silver and gold

556 × 180 mm

donor: Jacob b. Abraham of the *pqwh* family

artist: Isaac b. Ṣadaqa of the *ytrnh* family

S. Manning, *Those Holy Fields*, 1874, ill. p. 136 (ill. repr. in
A.B. 344-345 (2.10.1983), p. 30).

C.R. Conder and H.H. Kitchener, *The Survey of Western Palestine*. Vol. II. Samaria, 1882, ill. after p. 206.

G. Grove, “Nabroos and the Samaritans (in 1861).” 1890, pp.
256-257; repr. in A.B. 344-345 (2.10.1983), pp. 62-66.⁴

J.A. Montgomery, *The Samaritans*, 1907, ill. after p. 286.

Whiting, “The Last Israelitish Blood Sacrifice,” 1920, p. 45 (ill.).

M. Gaster, *The Samaritans*, 1923, pp. 193-194.

H. Glaser, “Die Samaritaner,” 1926, p. 6 (ill.).

S. Ferber, “The Temple of Solomon,” 1976, pp. 31-38, fig. 12
(lower part not on plate; left and right side reversed; dated
to the 17th cent.).

The Torah Scroll (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 1979), p. 49
(ill.).

⁴ According to Grove, after the Yom Kippur celebrations of 1861, “the priest” showed him in the synagogue of Nablus “the case of the Great Roll” and allowed him to make some “rubbings of parts of it” (p. 256). First the priest claimed that it was 1400 years old. However, when Grove expressed doubts and suggested that 400 years would be more likely, the priest examined the case and “found a date which he read as equivalent to A.D. 1420” (p. 257). In a footnote, Grove adds: “These rubbings have since been shown to the authorities of the South Kensington Museum, and pronounced to be Venetian work of the fourteenth or fifteenth century” (p. 257). Unfortunately, Grove’s description is not accompanied by an illustration, but the engraving he saw must be the same as the one the Torah Scroll case of 1522. This is confirmed by a note in M.E. Rogers, “Books and Book-Binding in Syria and Palestine” 42.

P.-J. Callebaut, *Les Derniers Samaritains. Mémoire des Hommes.*
Paris: ASFAR, 1990, p. 79 (ill.).

B. Yaniv, “אַתְנָעָמִיקְתָּן”, A.B. 625 (25.12.1994), pp. 35-40 (ill.).

4. Montserrat, Abbey, Library, Ms. Or. 145

19th/20th cent.

paper

multicolored

498 × 327 mm

bought by Father Bonaventura Ubach, monk of Montserrat, in
1910 or 1923, probably in Nablus⁵

N. Allony and A.M. Figueras, “Manuscritos hebraicos de la
Biblioteca de Montserrat,” 1959, p. 244.

N. Allony and E. (F.) Kupfer, *The Institute of Hebrew Manu-*
scripts. List of Photocopies in the Institute, Part II, 1964,
p. 102, no. 1234.

5. London, Valmadonna Trust Library 20e (I)⁶

early 20th cent.

paper

multicolored, colored pencil or crayon

409 × 289 mm

D. Sassoon, *Ohel Dawid*, 1932, p. 603.

Sotheby Catalogue of Public Auction on May 12, 1981, p. 137
(ill.).

6. London, Valmadonna Trust Library 20e (II)⁷

⁵ I want to thank G. Joan-Andreu Rocha, Assistant Librarian of the Library of
the Abbey of Montserrat, for this information (letter of October 24, 1995).

⁶ Formerly Sassoon 33. Since this and the next drawing are catalogued under
the number 20e, I have added (I) and (II) for easier reference.

⁷ Formerly Sassoon 33.

early 20th cent.

paper

multicolored, colored pencil or crayon

463 × 352 mm

D. Sassoon, *Ohel Dawid*, 1932, p. 603.

Sotheby Catalogue of Public Auction on May 12, 1981, p. 137.

7. Manchester, JRULM Sam Ms 330

early 20th cent.

paper

multicolored

465 × 360 mm

artist: Jacob b. Aaron

Gaster, *Samaritans*, 1925, pl. 4 and pp. 193-194.

Leveen, *The Hebrew Bible in Art*, 1944, 67-68, pl. XXII (ill.)

(wrong description on p. XI, and under the plate).

C. Roth, "Jewish Antecedents", 1953, p. 36 and pl. 10b (ill.).

Robertson, *Catalogue II*, 1962, cols. 251-252.

Enc. Jud. 14 (1971), 739, fig. 5.

S. Ferber, "The Temple of Solomon," 1976, pp. 31-38, fig. 13.

A.B. 248 (15.11.1979), p. 2.

8. Manchester, JRULM Sam Ms 330A

early 20th cent.

paper

multicolored

685 × 380 mm

artist: Abisha b. Pinhas

Robertson, *Catalogue II*, 1962, col. 252, pl. 11.

Rabinowicz, *Treasures of Judaica*, 1971, p. 160 (ill.).

Dexinger, *Der Taheb* (1978), Abb. 11.

Pummer, *The Samaritans*, 1987, pl. VIIIa.

9. Boston, Boston University, Percy E. Woodward Collection of Art and Archaeology of the Jefferson and Brown Museum of the Boston University School of Theology
early 20th cent.
paper
multicolored⁸
457 × 329 mm
artist: Jacob b. Aaron
Purvis, “Two Samaritan Drawings,” 1989 (ill.).
Purvis, “The Tabernacle in Samaritan Iconography,” 1994 (ill.).
10. Boston, Boston University, William E. Barton Collection of the Special Collections Division of the Mugar Memorial Library
early 20th cent.
paper
multicolored⁹
435 × 286 mm
artist: Jacob b. Uzzi
Jacob b. Aaron, “The Messianic Hope of the Samaritans,” 1907 (ill.).
Purvis, “Two Samaritan Drawings,” 1989 (ill.)
Purvis, “The Tabernacle in Samaritan Iconography,” 1994 (ill.)
11. Leeds, Brotherton Library, Cecil Roth Collection, MS 623
ca. 1930
paper

⁸ Colored pencil or crayon (Purvis, “Two Samaritan Drawings” 118, and “Tabernacle” 227).

⁹ “Ink of metallic compound” (Purvis, “Tabernacle” 227); see also “Two Samaritan Drawings” 109: possibly “powdered metal [perhaps copper] mixed with a bituminous substance.”

multicolored

570 × 410 mm

artist: Taqā b. Maṣliaḥ b. Pinḥas b. Ishaq b. Salama b. Ṭabia,
Levitical priest

C. Roth, "Catalogue," 1950, no. 623.

12. Cambridge, Girton College, Mary Frere Hebrew Library
19th/20th cent.

paper

multicolored

571 × 482 mm

H. Loewe, *Catalogue*, 1915, no. 47.

13. Vienna, Völkerkundemuseum
early 20th cent.
acquired by the Museum in 1994¹⁰

artist: Abisha b. Pinhas

[Asher b. Maṣliaḥ] Hasanein Wasef Kahan,¹¹ *The Samaritans—
Their History, Religion, Customs*. Nablus, [1]970, ill. on p.
21 and the end cover page.

[Asher b. Maṣliaḥ]¹² יפתח (חסנין) אשר הכהן
(ed. Abraham Tsedaka). Nablus, 1968, ill. on p. 14.

¹⁰ The item has not yet been catalogued.

¹¹ This is the form of the name as it appears on the cover and under the Introduction; under the photograph of the author on p. 1, the name is given as Wasef Tawfiq Kahan. The author, whose full name is Asher b. Maṣliaḥ b. Pinḥas, lived from 1895 to 1982 and was high-priest from 1980 to 1982; he was the nephew of Abisha b. Pinhas.

¹² This is the form in which the author's name appears on the title page; under the photograph on p. 3 the name is given as אשר (אשף) מצליה הכהן.

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THE POLITICS OF PURE LAND BUDDHISM IN INDIA

GALEN AMSTUTZ

Summary

Pure Land Buddhism achieved its primary influence in East Asia because it supplied a nonmonastic, autonomous source of religious authority and practice to middle elites in those cultural regions. In contrast Pure Land failed to achieve any success in India. The explanation for the marginalization of Indian Pure Land is probably sociopolitical: Pure Land teachings tended to bypass not only the authority of the Hindu brahmins, but even the authority of Buddhist renunciate orders. Indian social history did not produce any significant middle elites concerned with such non-gurucentric religious authority. As a result, Buddhist India did not produce any innovations in the upâya of religious institutionalization in Buddhism.

The Politics of Pure Land Buddhism in India

In the last millennium the most widespread form of Buddhist mythos in East Asia has been Pure Land Buddhism. Although this fact has irritated western-oriented Buddhological scholarship, Pure Land was a natural development of an Indian religious environment.

The Nature of “Devotional” Pure Land

Buddhism began with an ancient Indian śramaṇa model sharply defined by the myth of Śâkyamuni. The tendency towards the mythic hegemony of monasticism in Buddhism—which applies as much to Mahâyâna traditions as to early (Nikâya) traditions—was fundamental. Nevertheless, as the Buddhist tradition began to diversify in the Mahâyâna movement, one of the first variations was the teaching about the Pure Land.

As written artifacts, the two principal Indian Pure Land sūtras presenting this story appear to be part of the Ratnakûta collection, the

earliest Mahâyâna literature in India.¹ The texts which were afterwards central in the East Asian Buddhist tradition included the Wu-liang-shou ching (The Larger Sukhâvatî-vyûha, T 360 and others) and the A-mi-t'o ching (Smaller Sukhâvatî-[amrta]vyûha, or Amitâbhavyûha, T 366). A third work which became standard in East Asia, the Kuan wu-liang shou-fo ching (Kuan-ching) (T 365), was composed either in Central Asia or China but is consistent with Indian treatments of the Sukhâvatî-vyûha mythos.² A fourth work, the Pratyutpannasûtra, was also contemporaneous and concerned meditations on the Amitâbha Buddha.

The original Amitâbha sûtras were composed around 100 CE during the Kushan regime in northwest India (perhaps Bactria or the Kabul valley) in Gandhârî, a Prâkrit language of northwest India and central Asia which was in use from about 300 BCE to 300 CE.³ The Pure Land narrative which survived from this period to spread into East Asia, especially the description of the Pure Land realm itself, was probably the product of a deliberate compositional effort to assemble the most interesting and persuasive motifs from Buddhist, Hindu, Greek and Iranian sources to arrive at the most superior possible vision of a “paradise.” The idea of the Amitâbha Pure Land was probably “ingeniously, and with great care, invented” by Pure Land followers using mythic ideas including the cakravartin (great king turning the wheel of dharma), Uttarakuru (Buddhist cosmological geography), devalokas (realms of the gods) and stûpas, with the elements of material imagery symbolizing religious enlightenment.⁴

The principal sûtras were only a part of a larger field of Pure Land imagination which included a number of writings and a number of other bodhisattvas who were identified with the past lives of Amitâbha. References to Amitâbha’s Pure Land and recommendations about rebirth there as a goal are found in a variety of texts even where Pure Land is not the main object of attention. Amitâbha turns up in over one-third of the translations of Indian Mahâyâna texts in the Chinese canon, a total that comes to more than 270 pieces.⁵ A generic concept of Sukhâvatî was widespread.⁶ On the surface, such literary evidence suggests that Pure Land myth had been integrated

into early Indian Mahâyâna practice and cult organization by 200 CE,⁷ although the exact sources, conditions and extent of the original Amitâbha cultus are unclear.⁸

Although it has been held that Pure Land represented a pseudo-Buddhist reflection of some kind of Indo-Iranian theism,⁹ Pure Land was definitely a product of Buddhism, especially of the ancient ideas of the bodhisattva and the vows of the bodhisattva or Buddha. The ultimate aim of all Pure Land teaching was the eventual attainment of Buddhist nirvâna, not the transitional rebirth in a paradise.¹⁰ Pure Land developed logically in Mahâyâna literature in India. Stage one seems to have involved the idea, which emerged soon after the death of Śâkyamuni, that many other Buddhas had existed in the past; this soon became linked to the idea of future Buddhas. The appearance of these past and future Buddhas on the mythic stage universalized and made more flexible the idea of enlightenment. Stage two followed when, mostly as part of the Mahâyâna movement, Buddhist cosmology was expanded and inflated well beyond the idea of past and future Buddhas, so that it included not only an indefinitely large number of Buddhas but also an infinitely large number of realms and universes in which Buddhas operated.¹¹ For some followers, the karmic power of these transcendent “savior” Buddhas and bodhisattvas became the focus of attention and merit and merit transference was sought from them. In stage three, the specific Amitâbha Pure Land mythos became established. In stage four, a range of practices associated with the Pure Land orientation appeared. At one extreme, the practices could be the preserve of religious specialists, involving the shamanistic vision quest and resembling tantra (visualization-based Pure Land practice was associated with a class of Mahâyâna samâdhi texts, most importantly later the Kuan-ching). At the other extreme, however, Pure Land teaching could also be interpreted as a teaching for nonspecialists at a far lower level of expectations, the ritual affiliation (possibly) involving something as simple and mundane as recitation of the name of the Buddha. (In the final stage five a critical commentarial tradition became attached to Pure Land, but this probably occurred entirely in China.)¹²

The underlying concepts of Pure Land were typical of Mahâyâna: the distinctive feature was that they set up a strongly “dualistic” or bipolar relationship between the human realm of ignorance and the ideal realm of enlightenment. The Pure Land was an abode of Buddha (Buddha-kṣetra). From the standpoint of the individual seeking religious liberation, the Pure Land served as a karmic transit zone. “Rebirth” in Amitâbha’s Pure Land (i.e., karmically shifting one’s stream of consciousness to a realm near the Buddha) merely moved the transformative changes which might (ideally) be undergone by a renunciant specialist in this world to another place and a future time where such changes might be more accessible. The Pure Land did not have the substantial epistemological character of any heaven; it manifested both enlightened and unenlightened phases, and did not “exist” any more than any other region of reality characterized by the Buddha’s consciousness.

Key, however, to Amitâbha’s Sukhâvatî was the vagueness and openness of the presupposed conditions according to which human beings could direct their religiosity in order to be reborn in (karmically transferred to) the environment of this Pure Land when they ended their earthly biological spans. Almost any degree of attention to the Buddha would enable rebirth in Sukhâvatî. Beings needed only to set their minds on Amitâbha, cultivate “roots of good,” and plan for achieving enlightenment there. Even beings that had not done well over their lifetimes in attending to the Buddha could achieve rebirth with Amitâbha if they just directed their thoughts that way on their deathbeds and experienced a vision of Amitâbha; even a single sincere thought might be sufficient. Thus the language of the original sûtras collapsed all degrees of practice and attention into a nondiscriminative wave of hopeful good will. The sheer broadness of the path that led into the Pure Land became the rhetorical center.

Pure Land is routinely described as “devotional.” Yet any rhetorical isolation of a devotional Buddhism as if it were a category separated from (and subordinate to) “normal” Buddhism is a misrepresentation. All Buddhism is devotional. It deals with experiential transformations which in all cases pose ideals empirically “exter-

nal” to the starting status of the devotee. In the earliest stages Buddhism posed the experience of Śākyamuni as a mythic ideal external to the individual followers. The actual ongoing physical presence of the Buddha was presupposed in the sacred installations of medieval Indian monasteries.¹³ In the Mahâyâna movement depictions of the ideal merely became multiplied, broadened and abstracted. The movement may even have grown out of the visionary experiences of small scattered groups which were afterwards perpetuated by initiatory lineages.¹⁴ Mahâyâna devotionalism involved elements of the tantric, the shamanic quest and the arts of clairvoyance; it may have shared with other Indian traditions a historical wave of “visionary theism” which affected religious imagination in all of north India.¹⁵

Presupposing multiple aspects of “Buddha,” later Mahâyâna in India integrated philosophy, meditation, a hierarchical ritual monastic system, and personal contact with concrete deities who provided access to supernormal powers and effects along with prajñâ.¹⁶ The texts of Bhâvaviveka, a sixth century Madhyamaka thinker, show that the concept of emptiness and the concept of the Buddha were inseparable, and to “see” the philosophical idea was the same as seeing “the Buddha.” Emptiness was associated with a specific form of sensory perception, and visual power yielded concrete visions of the Buddha’s physical form merged with intellectual understanding in a single philosophical and devotional event.¹⁷ Bhâvaviveka described phases of his Buddhist practice quasi-physically as “palaces,” just as pilgrims such as Hsüan-tsang encountered the Indian Buddhist reality of emptiness in the physical form of landscape, sacred sites, stupas, relics, monastic persons, supernormal events, superknowledges (ab-hijñâ), concrete manifestations of the Buddha, and visions. Out of this combination of self-reliance and dependence on Buddhas and bodhisattvas arises the special “irony” characteristic of the more sophisticated Mahâyâna literature, in that to be truly independent is to realize one’s dependence on others, especially spiritual beings manifesting emptiness.¹⁸

Such a merger among visionary experience, the monastic experience, Mahâyâna philosophy, the Amitâbha Buddha, and the variety

of possible goals held out by “Pure Land” practice was demonstrated in the *Pratyutpanna-sūtra*, a text preserved mainly in Tibetan and Chinese. This text propounded visionary contact with Amitābha for the purpose of furthering one’s goal of becoming a perfected bodhisattva in this world. Unlike the *Sukhāvatīvyūha* it did not deal mainly with the goal of rebirth in a transitional Pure Land, but it did present the Amitābha meditations in terms of the Perfection of Wisdom literature.¹⁹

Technical terms used to indicate relations with the Buddha of the Pure Land included *buddhānusmṛti* (remembering the Buddha), *prasada* (purity), and *adhimukti* (directing attention); these were related to the generic Indian term *śraddhā* (entrusting, giving one’s attention).²⁰ The meaning of *śraddhā* was nonspecific, conveying broadly the idea of participation, engagement, praxis, or more elaborately, participation in any ritual and symbol system which aimed to lead the mind into contact with a higher reality.²¹ Even in Pali texts the term (*saddhā* in Pali) does not have one precise meaning, but is used in various contexts to indicate a whole range of engagement or serious encounters with Buddhist practice.²² Indian commentators on *tathāgatagarbha* thought (which pushed to an extreme a monistic rhetoric in Indian Buddhism) placed a high value on terms such as *śraddhā* to describe enlightenment.²³ The usual translation into English for these terms has been “faith,” but against the normal English semantics based on Christian or Near Eastern religious associations the term is misleading.

Pure Land practices in India remained closely tied to the visionary experience characteristic of religious specialists.²⁴ It is likely that the terms given above for “thinking” about the Buddha or “directing attention” to him originally meant some sort of visionary experience (even if it were open to non-monastic people without esoteric lineage requirements).²⁵ The relevant sūtras mention the cultivation of good deeds,²⁶ but they also mention deathbed visions and dream visions.²⁷ This socially open, but still vision-oriented, experience is what Pure Land entailed up until approximately the early T’ang period in China. Only at that point did the nonvisionary practice of

reciting the Buddha's name with low levels of expectation begin to achieve any importance.²⁸

Thus, most of the original management of Pure Land "devotionalism" occurred in the monastic context.²⁹ This phenomenon was true not only for Pure Land, but for the host of other Buddhist deities and practices. (Descriptions of the visionary relationship between this world and the Pure Land as "dualistic" are easily misconstrued without this understanding.) The differences between popular Pure Land devotionalism and monastic practices of Pure Land devotionalism were merely matters of intensity, expectations and access. As Pure Land evolved later in China, the popular tradition would maintain somewhat lower (albeit serious) expectations in exchange for a sense of almost universal access; the monastic level would preserve somewhat higher expectations in linkage with the monastic tradition.

Although no commentarial material survives which indicates that in India the Pure Land language was philosophically elaborated in the same way as the rest of Buddhist language, Chinese and Japanese scholars have always assumed that the Pure Land texts were already backgrounded in India by the same philosophical considerations as the rest of Mahâyâna tradition. At the same time, as in some other Mahâyâna texts such as the Lotus Sûtra, the text's attention is so far focused away from philosophical issues per se that such presuppositions have to be gathered from context.³⁰

Pure Land's Weakness in India as a Concretely Operant Tradition

Despite the textual evidence from the sûtras, the practical strength of Pure Land as a working tradition in India at any time is doubtful.³¹ Some stone foundations for an Amitâbha image dated 104 CE from Mathurâ are the only archaeological record of an exclusivistic Amitâbha Pure Land practice. Epigraphical evidence from Sañchî from the seventh century mentions Amitâbha, but only in connection with verses praising Avalokiteśvara. Archaeologically speaking the original, non-tantric Amitâbha practice in India appears to have been narrowly confined to the Kusâna period (ca. 50-200 CE) in northwest

India, after which it faded. It exerted no influence elsewhere in India and even in northwest India it had no influence during the subsequent Gupta period.³² The diaries of early Chinese pilgrims to India do not refer to Pure Land; the earliest and final mention is in the report of Hui-jih (Tz'u-min, d. 748), who began his India pilgrimage in 702. Hui-jih claimed that Indian teachers told him to pursue Pure Land as the quickest means of seeing the Buddha, and he is supposed to have had a Pure Land vision during his sojourn. However, Hui-jih's account is probably unreliable because of his own Chinese Pure Land biases. When he returned home, he became one of the major Pure Land teachers in the later T'ang period.³³

A distinct sociopolitical history, the issue which becomes crucial in China and Japan, is obscure in India. Practically nothing is known about the circumstances of social production and reproduction of the texts. There is no evidence that Pure Land led to the formation of distinct communities with an unusual character. Generally, scholars have searched in vain for substantial evidence that Indian approaches to Buddhism deviated significantly from the basic, renunciation-oriented Śākyamuni mythos: even where some Buddhist communities of an alternate character "lay" existed, they did so on a "lay bodhisattva" basis which was closely tied to monasticism.³⁴ Only the most fragmentary anecdotal evidence suggests that Pure Land teaching might have been associated with creating a Buddhist mythos of a new social character.³⁵

Some evidence suggests conflicts between monastic and nonmonastic groups in India based on differing uses of the Pure Land texts. Criticisms made in the *Pratyutpanna-sūtra*—against an alleged materialist understanding of a visionary buddhānusmṛti experience and mere desire for a fortunate rebirth—seemed to indicate attacks on the *Sukhāvatīvyūha* goals. The monastic *Pratyutpanna* stressed the emptiness of the vision of Amitābha, with all the attendant philosophical language. In contrast to this the *Sukhāvatīvyūha*'s encounter with Amitābha was said to be depicted as an "actual" event, taking place primarily at the moment of death and indirectly associated with the supernormal powers and attributes of beings in the Pure Land.³⁶ The

two sūtras may represent differing approaches to the ideas of budhānusmṛti and buddha-darsana correlated, respectively, with more monastic and less monastic factions of Indian Mahāyāna.

Pure Land was associated with tathāgatagarbha theory and related ideas about the inherent universal liberation of beings, and the Yogācāra text Ratnagotravibhāga ends with an invocation to Amitābha.³⁷ However, associations between tathāgatagarbha and Pure Land did not mean that the two kinds of mythos agreed on practice. The Yogācāra text Mahāyānasamgraha displays polemics against Pure Land. Apparently Pure Land had been institutionalized to some extent in Mahāyāna practice and cult before the Yogācāra synthesis, so that by the time that Yogācāra emerged the Amitābha tradition had grown so popular (at least in some locales) that the mythic-devotional figure of Śākyamuni (who represented monastic ideals) had been in some cases relegated to the margins of Mahāyāna attention. In response, already before the time of Asaṅga (the chief thinker associated with Yogācāra) a movement had arisen to defend Śākyamuni against Amitābha.³⁸ The tenth chapter of the Mahāyānasamgraha tried to subordinate a variety of diverse practices (including the Pure Land practice and Amitābha) to the unified Yogācāra interpretation. Like the Pratyutpanna, Yogācāra thinkers were apparently concerned that the Pure Land approach and its “dualism” might result in practitioners’ thinking that Amitābha and the Pure Land were somehow substantially real entities, something that might be clung to in an illusory quest for security.³⁹ The Yogācāra argument was intended to deny the practical legitimacy of some popular interpretations of the Pure Land.⁴⁰

Such bits of evidence show early friction between a monastic devotionalism and a somewhat more popular devotionalism, played out as a contest between the mythic figures of Śākyamuni and Amitābha. This anticipated the later friction between Ch'an/Zen rhetoric and Pure Land rhetoric in China and Japan. Just as in the Mahāyānasamgraha, monastic Ch'an/Zen would later try to coopt popularized Pure Land and depict it as an inferior form of Śākyamuni's teachings.⁴¹

What is beyond doubt, in any case, is that from an early stage the Pure Land mythos flourished only outside of India. The strong connection between Pure Land and non-Indian groups to the north and west of India must be interpreted in terms of this Indian disinclination regarding the Pure Land variant of Mahâyâna.⁴²

Some Relevant Features of Bhakti

Pure Land Buddhism was philosophically not related to bhakti traditions in Hinduism, and the social profile of bhakti became quite different from that of Pure Land in India. However, both grew out of the same civilization, and a look at bhakti helps illuminate the relationships which might exist between religious rhetoric and society in India.⁴³

The basis of Hinduism is an idea of Ultimate Reality called Brahman. The relevant religious practices usually emphasized ascetic renunciation and the achievement of power through various kinds of sacrifice. Hinduism inherited from pre-Aryan India a long indigenous tradition of meditative asceticism (muni-yati cults); when this tradition was assimilated to Aryan brahmanical religion involving ṛsis in the Upaniṣadic period it resulted in the classic brahmanical myth of the search for transcendence culminating in the renunciant hero. The classic renunciant was closely associated with monistic religio-philosophical language. The teachings were expressed in the Vedic literature, received their classical formulation in the doctrines of Śaṅkara, and were otherwise immensely developed in brahmanical speculation in India.

Nevertheless, bhaktic, or “devotional” versions of Hindu religiosity also made their appearance at the earliest stage. Bhakti religiosity assumed that the relationship between man and the ultimate reality was not based on an undifferentiated monism, but rather entailed a “dual” structure, expressing both differentiation between man and Brahman on the one hand and active interrelationship and communion between them on the other. Bhakti can be described as bipolar, dyadic or personalistic because the significance and differentiation of the individual vis à vis the Ultimate is taken as a serious issue. As in the

case of Buddhist śraddhā, the assumptions of bhakti do not translate easily into English or any European language. Crucially, bhakti and Brahman do not contain the epistemological or ontological meanings of the creator God of Near Eastern traditions because they refer to the Upaniṣadic sense of the ultimate.

Historically, the energies of bhakti apparently came originally from outside the brahmins' Aryan ruling class, reflecting the interests of indigenous peoples in retaining tribal or local deities, although bhakti and brahminism were eventually inseparably blended. Because of the brahminical flexibility, bhaktic versions of Hinduism also became immensely complex.⁴

The formal synthesis of brahminical philosophy and the bipolar structure of bhakti began with certain of the Upaniṣads, became overt in the Bhagavadgītā, and emerged most prominently in the Vaiṣṇava traditions, which had the strongest tendency to assimilate to brahmanism and to seek self-justification through the generation of Vedantic doctrines. Most Vaiṣṇavas regarded Rāmānuja (eleventh century) as the culmination of Vedantic bhakti theology. Where Śaṅkara had offered a monistic interpretation of the Upaniṣads, Rāmānuja developed a bhaktic version. This analysis (*viśiṣṭāvaita Vedānta*) has been unhelpfully translated as "qualified nondualism," but the real sense of *viśiṣṭa* is "differentiation:" "(contingent) differentiation in a ground of nondual brahman." Brahman is supreme above all, but several types of knowledge are separately real, including nonsentient matter and sentient but finite/ignorant human selves. Thus human consciousness establishes "dependent" relationships with its Ultimate matrix, because it is discriminated or differentiated—if only contingently—from that matrix.⁴⁵ In any case Rāmānuja's ideas had nothing to do with a simple "devotionalism."

Viśiṣṭa arguments about the existential and logical differentiation of the human from God/brahman naturally developed into existential questions of practice, because the more clearly God the matrix was differentiated from the human, the more questions would arise about how the human side could bridge the gap and to create out of human powers the communiting relationship with the ultimate re-

ality. The debate developed in greatest complexity in the two south Indian wings of the Śrī Vaiṣṇava tradition, Vadgalai and Tengalai. Traditional teachings had required bhaktiyoga, a complex religious method tied to brahminical styles of education and practice, including knowledge of the Vedas and śāstras, lifetimes of meditation and ritual practice, and finally the antimasmṛti or final remembrance of the Lord at the conclusion of the biological span. This restrictive view was gradually altered in the medieval traditions such as Pañcarātras and Alvars, and attention was directed to certain writings attributed to Rāmānuja in which the emotional “surrender” elements of the bhakti teachings are stressed rather than the philosophical analysis.⁴⁶ For some of the teachings prapatti (surrender, radical grace, devotion, yielding to God) was in theory open to all, regardless of birth, education or even worldly ability, needing none of the ritual accessories (angas) of brahminical bhaktiyoga. Prapatti could thus be understood as an independent upāya towards salvation.⁴⁷

The two Śrīvaiṣṇava streams maintained different views on the relative value of prapatti and bhaktiyoga and on the proper relationship between them; the main question was the residual validity of bhaktiyoga.⁴⁸ The more radical was the Tengalai school, associated with the teachings of Pillai Lokācārya (1264-1369). Pillai took the position that strictly speaking, the grace of Brahman (in this case manifested as the goddess Śrī or Lakṣmî, consort of the supreme male deity Nārāyaṇa) was all that was needed to achieve liberation.⁴⁹ Bhaktiyoga could be abandoned at the time of the realization of the soul’s utter dependence on the Lord. Self-effort and self-purposive practices were only provisional and ultimately at odds with the soul’s true nature of dependence on the Lord. The scriptural requirements of ritual, wisdom and devotion were both ideal but in the final analysis also unnecessary. Since, in fact, the traditional brahminical requirements could not logically have any causal force toward liberation because the human is totally dependent on God, the only reason they would be performed, especially after surrender to God, would be to please God and to provide witness to the grace of God. Tengalai teachers gave priority to the devotion represented by the Alvars, epics and

puranas, and preferred a relatively informal rhetoric based in popular oral religious life.⁵⁰

In theory such medieval developments of Indian bhakti, both in south India and in the related sant tradition of north India, could have sharp political implications, as summarized for example by A.K. Ramanujan:

...bhakti religions like Vîraśaivism are Indian analogues to European protestant movements. Here we suggest a few parallels: protest against mediators like priest, ritual, temples, social hierarchy, in the name of direct, individual, original experience; a religious movement of and for the underdog, including saints of all castes and trades (like Bunyan, the tinker), speaking the sub-standard dialect of the region, producing often the first authentic regional expressions and translations of inaccessible Sanskritic texts (like the translations of the Bible in Europe); a religion of arbitrary grace, with a doctrine of the mystically chosen elect, replacing a social hierarchy-by-birth with a mystical hierarchy-by-experience; doctrines of work as worship leading to a puritan ethic; monotheism and evangelism, a mixture of intolerance and humanism, harsh and tender.⁵¹

Relevant Similarities of Bhakti and Pure Land

Bhakti Hinduism and Pure Land Buddhism are both counterintuitive from classical Near Eastern theistic religious perspectives. Both possess underlying theories of knowledge which (while quite distinguishable from each other) when compared to traditional Western thought are nonfoundational and process-oriented. In this underlying flexibility, both Hinduism and Buddhism stand in contrast to the historical concreteness, linearity, and epistemological realism which characterize Near Eastern traditions. The flexibility of the theories of knowledge yield a different attitude to textuality and mythmaking: while neither tradition has been unaware of texts which might be appealed to as ultimate reference, it is easy to understand the textual corpus as something expanding and renewable. This allows a large literature with a plethora of mythic characters, stories and technical philosophical terms which all make potential authority claims. In both Hinduism and Buddhism, the relative openness of theories of knowledge gives scope for a rich admixture of folk religion and an

accommodation to the coexistence of multiple religious motives. Religious purism is rare; indeed, if it appears at all, it is primarily in a politically-driven context.

Both Hinduism and Buddhism were originally oriented to śramaṇa ideals, and because of these roots in the ascetic traditions of religious virtuosi, both have revealed a strong mainstream tendency to concentrate political power and authority in religious experts.⁵² The original focus on śramaṇa ideals has consequently meant that the Indian traditions have been confusing, and apparently contradictory, when they have seemed to double-back on themselves and to display a bipolar (dualistic or theistic) structure which superficially resembles the Near Eastern traditions. Both bhakti and Pure Land variants of Hinduism and Buddhism have diverged eventually from the pure monistic presentations derived from their śramaṇa cores by making explicit the bipolarity of experience. Depictions of the human religious predicament for both have involved tensions between the human reality and the religious ideal; pure monism has been regarded as a form of specialized religious rhetoric that does not represent the complexity of experienced religion.⁵³ Both reflect the ancient problem of the “leap” between different dimensions of experience which recurs explicitly or implicitly in all Indian traditions.⁵⁴

By making bipolarity explicit in a new way, the inherent tendency of both bhakti and Pure Land traditions was to equalize the status of human aspirants and to reduce the need for mediating authority. Particularly when devotional theory shifted in the direction of prapatti or radical grace, traditional understandings of religious mediation were interrupted. Bipolarity encouraged a shift towards a language reinforcing individual persons as independently religiously empowered.

Differences Between Pure Land and Bhakti

This is not to argue that bhakti and Pure Land shared anything more than these loose similarities. The underlying experiential, tonal, emotional and philosophical dimensions remained sharply different. Even where Pure Land practices superficially resembled tantric ones, involving shamanic techniques of visualization, still

. . . it is striking how—compared to the Bhagavadgītā—the Pure Land texts manage to divorce visualization from devotion: the saving Lord remains impersonal and distant, a power to be tapped by vision and recitation, in a cool and dazzling ecstasy rather than in a genuine encounter of the human with a divine other.⁵⁵

Polemics between Buddhists and Śaivas in medieval south India recorded in the literature of the bhakti movement show the two traditions became polarized in part because of the underlying incompatibility of their religious messages. Śaiva bhakti was concerned with affective encounters with Deity that often involved possession by the god and altered states bordering on madness; ecstatic dance, music and verse were the favored forms of communication. Bhakti placed a tremendous emphasis on literal, concrete manifestations of deities at particular sacred places at which power was made immanent. This kind of religiosity was remote from the cool control of mind and body imagined as the ideal in any form of Buddhist practice.⁵⁶

Pure Land was also a more purely Buddhist product than bhakti was a Vedantic product. It was probably hybridized consciously out of a variety of sources. Because Pure Land was not the product of preexisting popular strains of local religion which pressed their claims into the consciousness of renunciant specialists, it was simpler, more idealized and more abstracted than the varied and fragmented bhakti traditions.

Crucially, however, the historical sociopolitical outcomes of bhakti and Pure Land ideas in India were fundamentally divergent. Bhakti became the *de facto* mainstream presentation of Hinduism in the last millennium or so. In contrast, Pure Land Buddhism seems to have failed quite remarkably in India to gain any sort of long-term foothold (even taking into account the relatively small population of Buddhists in India at any time). Yet there certainly existed a theoretical potential for doctrinal evolution broadly parallel to that of radical bhakti, i.e., a *viśiṣṭa*-style analysis, with its combination of existential realism, philosophical sophistication, and potentially popularizing politics.

One explanation for failure is that it was mythically easier to marginalize the role of bipolar presentation in Buddhist traditions. Compared to Hinduism, Buddhism began even more unambiguously

with a śramaṇa model sharply defined by the myth of Śākyamuni; thereafter the specialist model of Buddhist practice was not challenged, as in the case of bhakti traditions, by popular energies originating from outside the system clamoring to be recognized in terms of the elite specialists of the system. Monastic Buddhism was vigorous, and it dominated Buddhism much more than any single mythic format dominated Hinduism. The bipolar mythic structure of Pure Land remained clearly subordinate to the mythic model of emulating Śākyamuni.

However, even monastic Buddhism in India eventually lost power. Why, when the monastic movement began to weaken in India, did Buddhist energies not simply shift to Pure Land approaches? Are there some logical or internal features inherent in the tradition that blocked Pure Land Buddhism from exploring the political and existential interests that encouraged a bhaktic or viśiṣṭa approach?

No such barriers are logically apparent. Therefore the most plausible hypothesis is the overall politics of Buddhism's relation to Hinduism. All Buddhism in India—even in its ordinary monastic forms—had trouble competing with later Hinduism. Scholars have not agreed on the reasons, but an argument which fits (especially in relation to Pure Land) is that Buddhism's main threat to Hinduism in India was not philosophy and not even surface social pragmatics (Buddhism in practice did not completely reject varna), but rather something more fundamental: the unsuccessful root challenge that the Buddhist mythos and its ideals offered to the brahminical vision of life-stages (âśramas) and the varna worldview. It is a possibility that in ancient India, for some centuries after the Aśokan imperial sponsorship of Buddhist institutions, the brahminical vision was actually put on the defensive. However, after about the first millennium, the rise of bhakti conclusively overcame Buddhist culture. Bhakti was a powerful synthesis of the matured political and economic interests of later premodern Indian society, which could incorporate the popular attachment to the gods while situating itself Vedantically under the religious authority of the brahmins and supporting the varna/jati system's programmatic social expectations.⁵⁷

Buddhism had no means of responding to later premodern Indian society's increasing need for social authority and caste articulation which was as effectively synthetic as bhakti (Buddhism's strongest gambit was the tantric guru-based traditions).⁵⁸ This noncompetitiveness was especially true for Pure Land. Normal Buddhism was already somewhat marginalized as a non-brahminical tradition. Pure Land, which could potentially detach itself from monasticism and guru-based authority, could thus also detach itself from the vestiges of varna influence that continued to cling to those forms of organization. The key historical fact is that no ancient and medieval Indians wanted, or were able, to pick up such possibilities.⁵⁹

Bhakti did not seriously challenge the structure of varna society. Leveling politics do not appear in the *Bhagavadgītā*, for example, which although it was about bhakti was also a highly brahminical text concerned with the preservation of social structure. Vaiṣṇavism associated with Rāmānuja remained strongly brahminical. Even in the more radical versions of Śrīvaiṣṇavism, prapatti tended to be assimilated to brahminical ritual: the tradition was resistant to allowing the teachings to subvert the dominant authority relationships of Indian society. In the Tengalai school, the theory of ignoring caste was honored far more in the breach than in the ritual observance.⁶⁰ Long term developments in the sant traditions were similar.⁶¹

Hindu religiosity has been thoroughly dominated by religious virtuosi, their special religious communities, and patronage by central political authorities (often with cosmological wholistic visions about the central role of themselves in a unified cosmos). The insistence on maintaining a cosmologically fixed social structure in God's fluid world may be one of the central paradoxes of mainstream Hindu religious thought, but the more privileged elements of a society did not see the differentiations of social reality as a problem. Nothing was more characteristic of India than the "harmonization" (i.e., undifferentiated submersion) of all philosophical and religious perspectives into the basic caste cultural politics of the society and the economic and political interests managed by caste agreements. The theoretical political implications of bhakti idealized by Ramanujan had little ef-

fect on the underlying politics of Indian society up to and including the twentieth century. Bhakti did not succeed in introducing real social alterity into Hindu society.⁶² Renunciant and bhaktic versions of the traditions were never allowed to separate into truly independent institutions with independent social agendas, as would become the case with major parts of Chinese and Japanese Pure Land Buddhism.

It was because of the evolution of such middle-elite interest groups, who were able to insist on supporting socially-open interpretations of Pure Land, that the direction of Pure Land would become so different in China and Japan. Obviously, then, the Amitâbha cult depended for its flourishing on its contact with the non-Indian world, and the only directions where Pure Land Buddhism could succeed were beyond the authority structures of Indian society.⁶³

The Limits of Indian Buddhist Upâya

Pure Land has a low reputation in Western scholarship partly because of Westerners' orientalist interest in exotic (i.e., monastic and monistic) religious forms, but also because in a straightforward historical way it failed politically in Indian culture. However, understanding this failure in a more insightful way has implications for a view of Buddhism as a whole.

On a purely theoretical basis (and in view of the flourishing of Hindu bhakti doctrines and the success of the Shin tradition later in Japan) there is no reason why a sophisticated bipolar or "bhaktic" version of Buddhism could not have evolved in India. The non-renunciant and bipolar approach made at least as much sense in a Buddhist Mahâyâna context as in a Hindu one.⁶⁴ Traditional Indian Buddhism was in practice as much interested in the lived practical coexistence of the realms of ignorance and enlightenment (and the problems of mediating between them) as it was interested in formal analytical problems set by the parameters of Buddhist philosophy. A great deal of the teaching "work" of the tradition was carried by the implicit, but absolutely essential, mythic and institutional "devotionalisms" and "dualisms" of deity-belief systems and of rituals and

stories, which were taken to be the sine qua non of Buddhism in most of its history.

But no Indian Buddhist equivalent of Pillai Lokâchârya ever appeared. Despite the gradual decline of monasticism, somehow the Buddhist tradition's devotionalism remained allied with semi-monastic orientations or tantric lineage orientations. Somehow its practices of contact with spiritual beings allowed Indian Buddhism to ignore commentary on a variety of authority problems of the kind that preoccupied the prapatti teachers. What is certain in any case is that while intensive technical discursive attention in Indian Buddhist thought was turned to abstruse problems of perception and language, practically no theory was devoted to the "political" practices of the "upâya of institutions," in which Buddhists were actually immersed up to their necks. Somehow Indian Buddhism engaged in little or no systematic theoretical discussion of the prapatti problem or the problem of the "leap," and the conventions of monasticism or lineage in Buddhism were rarely if ever systematically questioned in the traditional Asian context of Buddhism outside of China or Japan. In short, the Indian experience left significant gaps in the Buddhist theory of upâya.

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¹ Akira Hirakawa, *History of Indian Buddhism, from Śâkyamuni to Nâgârjuna* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990), pp. 286-290; A.K. Warder, *Indian Buddhism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsi Dass, 1980), pp. 356-362.

² See Kenneth K. Tanaka, *The Dawn of Chinese Pure Land Buddhist Doctrine* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), p. 52.

³ Tanaka, pp. 3-4; Julian F. Pas, *Shan-tao's Commentary on the Amitâyur-Buddhânuṣmṛti-Sûtra* (McMaster University PhD dissertation, 1973), pp. 60-64.

⁴ Fujita Kôtatsu, *Genshi jôdo shisô no kenkyû*. 2nd ed. (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1970), p. 17.

⁵ Fujita Kôtatsu as cited in Hirakawa, *History of Indian Buddhism*, p. 290.

⁶ However, Sukhâvatî ideas were not often given central position, so the specific and restricted practice directed to Amitâbha was rare. See Gregory Schopen,

"Sukhāvatī as Generalized Religious Goal in Sanskrit Mahāyāna Buddhist Literature," *Indo-Iranian Journal*, vol. 19, pp. 177-210 (1977); see also Tanaka, p. 3.

⁷ See Paul Griffiths et al., trans., *The Realm of Awakening: a Translation and Study of the Tenth Chapter of Asaṅga's Mahāyānasangraha* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 35.

⁸ See Tanaka, pp. 8-9; on the origin of the Amitābha cult, see also Pas, pp. 4-64, esp. pp. 51-52. (Contending Pure Land cults did not reach even the same level of minor popularity, e.g., Aksobhya Buddha's Pure Land, which was aimed at ascetic renunciants. See Tai-wo Kwan, *A Study of the Teaching Regarding the Pure Land of Aksobhya Buddha in Early Mahāyāna* (University of California at Los Angeles PhD dissertation, 1987)).

⁹ Soho Machida, "Life and Life, the Infinite: A Historical and Philological Analysis of the Amida Cult," *Sino-Platonic Papers* [Department of Oriental Studies, University of Pennsylvania], no. 9, pp. 1-46 (December 1988); see also Tanaka.

¹⁰ Thus the conclusion of Fujita's standard study of Pure Land in India.

¹¹ The development of an expanded Buddhist devotional repertoire may have been connected to social instability after the breakdown of the Mauryan regime and the ultimately unsuccessful attempt to compete with emergent new Śaivite and Bhāgavata bhakti traditions; see below.

¹² On the five stages, see Tanaka, pp. 4-13.

¹³ Gregory Schopen, "The Buddha as an Owner of Property and Permanent Resident in Medieval Indian Monasteries," *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 18, pp. 181-217 (1990), and G. Schopen, "Burial Ad Sanctos and the Physical Presence of the Buddha in Early Indian Buddhism: A Study in the Archaeology of Religions," *Religion*, vol. 17, pp. 193-225 (1987).

¹⁴ Andrew Rawlinson, "The Problem of the Origin of the Mahayana," in Slater, Peter and Donald Wiebe, eds. *Traditions in Contact and Change. Selected Proceedings of the XIVth Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions* (Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1980), pp. 163-169.

¹⁵ Stephan Beyer, "Notes on the Vision Quest in Early Mahāyāna," in: Lancaster, Lewis, ed. *Prajñāpāramitā and Related systems: Studies in Honor of Edward Conze* (Berkeley: Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series, 1977); on the visionary qualities of the Sukhāvatī-vyūha and the Kuan-ching, see especially pp. 330-331.

¹⁶ The semantic field of the bodhisattva unquestionably included the idea of the wonder-worker; see Luis O. Gómez, "The Bodhisattva as Wonder Worker," in: Lancaster, Lewis, ed. *Prajñāpāramitā and Related systems: Studies in Honor of Edward Conze* (Berkeley: Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series, 1977), pp. 221-257. The main public function of the Buddhist monk throughout Asia at all times had to do with taking care of spirits of the dead via the supernormal powers accumulated through renunciation. See Gregory Schopen, "Filial Piety and the Monk in the Practice of Indian Buddhism: A Question of 'Sinicization' Viewed from the Other

Side," *T'oung Pao*, vol. 66, pp. 110-126 (1980) or John Strong, "Filial Piety and Buddhism: The Indian Antecedents to a Chinese' Problem," in: Peter Slater and Donald Wiebe, eds. *Traditions in Contact and Change* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1983) pp. 171-186.

¹⁷ Malcolm David Eckel, *To See the Buddha: a Philosopher's Quest for the Meaning of Emptiness* (San Francisco: Harper, 1991), pp. 3-4.

¹⁸ Bhāvaviveka's rhetoric also expressed "previous vows" (pranidhāna) by which the Buddha expressed his activity to rescue humankind. See Eckel, pp. 17-18, 51-61, 68-83, 147-148. Gratitude to an "empty" deity, the symbolized "otherness" of perfect emptiness, saturates Mahāyāna literature. Cf. George R. Elder, "'Grace' in Martin Luther and Tantric Buddhism," in: Houston, G.W., ed. *The Cross and the Lotus: Christianity and Buddhism in Dialogue* (Dehli: Motilal, 1985), pp. 39-49 (tantric Buddhism also can externalize the Buddha's action as "grace"). These ideas, which originate quite separately from the Pure Land mythos per se, parallel the later assumptions of Jōdoshinshū Buddhism in Japan.

¹⁹ Paul M. Harrison, "Buddhānusmṛti in the Pratyutpanna-Buddha-Sammukhāvasthita-samādhī-sūtra," *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 6, pp. 41-42 (1978).

²⁰ Although for heuristic purposes the bipolar structure of Pure Land can be called "bhaktic," the term is not used at all in the Sanskrit of the Indian Pure Land texts. See Fujita, pp. 545-549.

²¹ See William Cantwell Smith, *Faith and Belief* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), pp. 59-68.

²² B.M. Barua, "Faith in Buddhism," in: Law, B.C., ed. *Buddhist Studies* (Calcutta, 1931, 1983), pp. 329-349. Saddhā serves as part of various compound words which point to various levels of attainment, including the highest ones. Standing by itself without specific context saddhā or śraddhā is ambiguous. See also Nihon bukkyō gakkai, ed. *Bukkyō ni okeru shin no mondai* (Kyoto: Heirakuji shoten, 1963) and Sung Bae Park, *Buddhist Faith and Sudden Enlightenment* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983) and Wonhyo's *Commentaries on the Awakening of Faith in Mahāyāna* (University of California, Berkeley PhD dissertation, 1979). Nevertheless representatives of Pali Buddhism have tried to insist that although devotional and faith elements were unquestionably part of early Buddhism, Mahāyāna diverged in non-Buddhist directions. (For example, K.N. Upadhyaya, "The Impact of the Bhakti Movement on the Development of Mahayana Buddhism," in: Narain, A.K., ed. *Studies in the History of Buddhism* (papers at International Conference on History of Buddhism at University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1980), pp. 349-357.)

²³ David Seyfort Ruegg, *Buddha-nature, Mind and the Problem of Gradualism in Comparative Perspective: on the Transmission and Reception of Buddhism in India and Tibet* (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1989), pp. 46-48.

²⁴ The evidence necessarily comes mostly from the Chinese record. See Carl B. Becker, "Religious Visions: Experiential Grounds for the Pure Land Tradition," *Eastern Buddhist*, vol. 17, no. 7, pp. 138-153 (1984).

²⁵ However, the categorization of ranks of followers is not very central or important in the original texts, and distinctions between initiated specialists and non-initiated non-specialists, or between monastics and laypersons, are not at issue. (Fujita, p. 537)

²⁶ Schopen, "Sukhāvatī as a Generalized Goal."

²⁷ A special relationship may exist between Pure Land imagery and the common medical phenomenon of the near-death or deathbed vision. (Cf. Becker)

²⁸ The interpretation of Pure Land throughout Asia has been deeply influenced, or perhaps confused, by the retroactive interests of Japanese Pure Land (especially Jōdoshinshū) in demonstrating that its egalitarian practices and ideas go back to ancient Buddhism.

²⁹ Monks and nuns, along with lay people, were heavily involved in the donative, merit-making activities at stūpa sites; cult activities were probably led by monastics. This is exactly the pattern which prevailed in early Chinese Buddhism. Gregory Schopen, "Two Problems in the History of Indian Buddhism: The Layman/Monk Distinction and the Doctrines of the Transference of Merit," *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik*, vol. 10, pp. 9-47 (1985).

³⁰ E.g., the Pure Land literature may even have been written by a different community than the one which compiled the Perfection of Wisdom literature (Hirakawa, *History of Indian Buddhism*, p. 290). It is reasonable to assume, based on understandings of Pure Land later in other parts of Asia together with bits of evidence above, that the idea of the Pure Land was from the beginning multivocal. An uneducated peasant might have taken the imagery literally, but it is a modern artifact to suppose that religiously educated Indians would have taken Pure Land imagery "literally," rather than metaphorically, allusively, poetically, or visionarily.

³¹ The lack of contextual knowledge about ancient Indian Buddhism makes it extremely difficult to reconstruct. See Harrison, pp. 35-36.

³² Gregory Schopen, "The Inscription on the Kusān Image of Amitābha and the Character of the Early Mahāyāna in India," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 99-134 (1987).

³³ Tanaka, p. 3.

³⁴ Parts of Indian Buddhism both early and late may have accommodated a weak distinction between monk and lay statuses, but there was no long-term relaxation of quasi-monastic expectations. It has been argued that the lay-monk category may not be useful in classic Indian Buddhism, since the trend was to generalize to more followers the possibility of achieving yogic goals, such as the attainment of rebirth in Sukhāvatī, that were formerly the province of ascetics. (Gregory Schopen, "The Generalization of an Old Yogic Attainment in Medieval Mahāyāna Sūtra Literature:

Some Notes on Jātismara," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 133-134 (1983).) Yet in any case the category of practitioner was relatively elite, seeking power by means of special access to some kind of charismatic authority typically held in teaching lineages with or without full monastic precepts.

³⁵ For example, according to the Tibetan historian of Buddhism Tārānāth, "Amitābha's worship could be traced back to Sarāha or Rāhulbhadra, a great magician, and reputed to be the teacher of Nāgārjuna, who saw Amitābha in the land of Dhingkota and died with his face turned towards Suhāvatī. The name Sarāha does not sound Indian, probably a Sūdra represented in Tibetan scrolls with a beard and top knot and holding an arrow in his hand. Thus, the first person whom tradition connects with the worship of Amitābha was of low caste and bore a foreign name. He saw the deity in a foreign country, and was represented as totally unlike a Buddhist monk." (B.N. Puri, *Buddhism in Central Asia* (Dehli: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987), pp. 142-143.)

³⁶ While the vision that led to the Sukhāvatīvyūha Pure Land may have been differently oriented than the Pratyutpanna—the former was after all meant to create wide access to the Buddha—it is illegitimate to sharply oppose the texts, because the difference is one of degree, not of kind. (Cf. Harrison, esp. pp. 51-52.) Harrison argues that the Sukhāvatīvyūha is less sophisticated because its Amitābha is said to be not nirmita ("apparitional"). However, the term nirmita in Sanskrit actually has no philosophical content but was a descriptive term associated with the idea of "earthly" manifestations of the Buddha, i.e., nirmānakaya, as contrasted with saṃbhogakāya. The Sukhāvatīvyūha merely indicates that Amitābha is a saṃbhogakāya entity. See Nakamura Hajime, ed. *Bukkyōgo daijiten* (Tokyo: Tōkyō shoseki, 1981), pp. 131, 291, 293.

³⁷ By the merit I have acquired through this,
May all living beings come to perceive
The Lord Amitāyus endowed with infinite light,
And, having seen him, may they, owing to the arising
Of the immaculate vision of the Doctrine in them
Obtain the Supreme Enlightenment.

(Translated by Jikido Takasaki, *A Study on the Ratnagotravibhāga (Uttaratantra)* (Roma: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1966), pp. 389-390; see esp. his footnote 84.)

³⁸ One Indian text, the Karunāpundarīka, was devoted to promoting Śākyamuni over Amitābha. (John P. Keenan, "Introduction," in: Griffiths et al., *The Realm of Awakening*, pp. 35-36.) The technical argument utilized was that because Śākyamuni has chosen this impure world as his sphere of activity, his compassion was superior to that of Buddhas like Amitābha who had chosen to reside in a pure world. In some

locales, the cult of Śākyamuni itself may have undergone a change in which he too came to be worshipped as some kind of altruistic savior.

³⁹ Keenan, pp. 37-39. The interpretation suggests that Yogācāra monastics were aware of the popularization of Pure Land myth and were already engaged in a polemic trying to draw it back into the range of rhetoric and practice which were de facto associated with monasticism. Thus Yogācārins denied that the karmic transition zone of the Pure Land “really existed;” if it did not really exist, ordinary persons could not make their orientation to it; if they could not make their orientation to it, the only access to Buddhism would be through the meditation and monistic insights of the specialists. But it is doubtful whether the Pure Land claim for a karmic transition zone was a claim that the Pure Land was “substantial” in the sense of svabhāva as treated in Madhyamaka thought! There is no indication in the intellectual Chinese and Japanese Pure Land traditions that mythic bipolarity ever involved such an attribution of “substantiality.” Furthermore, in view of the intensely imaginative and thaumaturgical worlds in all Asian monastic Buddhists also lived, any claim that Pure Landers engaged in exceptional imaginary supernaturalism, or that monastic Buddhism was in contrast “demythologized,” is disingenuous.

⁴⁰ Cf. Tanaka, p. 12.

⁴¹ See Paul O. Ingram, “The Zen Critique of Pure Land Buddhism,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, vol. 41, no. 2, pp. 184-200 (June 1973).

⁴² The imagery of Sukhāvatī (especially in its details reflecting visions of material wealth) may have reflected the prosperity of merchants in the boundary Kushan empire who were probably the best audience for Pure Land teaching. (Fujita, p. 256) The non-Indian trend is associated with the Pure Land escape from stūpa-based practices, which have sometimes been suggested as the source of a “lay” Mahāyāna. (Hirakawa Akira, *History of Indian Buddhism*, pp. 270-274, 308-311 and “The Rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism and Its Relationship to the Worship of Stūpas,” *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko*, vol. 22, pp. 77-91, 102-106 (1963).) The sukhāvatī in the Smaller Sukhāvatīvyūha Sūtra probably models the idealized image of an Indian stūpa, and passages in various older versions and translations of the Larger Sukhāvatīvyūha Sūtra introduce stūpa worship as one of the kinds of meritorious practice which will qualify followers for birth in the Pure Land. However references to stūpa worship tended to be edited out of later Pure Land texts. Probably Amitābha Buddha replaced the stūpa as the focus of attention because, as the more abstract (and flexible) representation of Buddhism, it manifested eternal life and left no death relics to be enshrined in fixed places. (Hirakawa, “The Rise of Mahāyāna,” pp. 91-94)

⁴³ On topics in Hinduism see Mircea Eliade, ed. *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1986).

⁴⁴ On the continuities between bhakti and the underlying brahminical-yogic interests of Vedantic religion, see Madeleine Biardeau. *Hinduism: The Anthropology of*

a Civilization (Dehli: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 84-121. On bhakti groups in general, see Jan Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens*, vol. II (Stuttgart, 1963), pp. 229-252, 125-150 and many other sources such as R.G. Bhandarkar, *Vaisnavism, Saivism and Minor Religious Systems* (Poona, 1982) and Mariasusai Dhavamony, *Love of God According to Śaiva Siddhānta* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971).

⁴⁵ On Rāmānuja's Vedantic technical thought see sources such as Anima Sen Gupta, *A Critical Study of the Philosophy of Ramanuja* (Varanasi: Chowhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1967) or P.N. Srinivasachari, *The Philosophy of Viśistāvaita*, 2nd ed. (Adyar, 1946). Śaiva Siddhānta analytical developments were equally complex, e.g., M.M. Arulchelvam, in: John Ross Carter, ed. *Of Human Bondage and Divine Grace* (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1992), pp. 1-55.

⁴⁶ See John Carman, *The Theology of Ramanuja: an Essay in Interreligious Understanding* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974).

⁴⁷ Patricia Y. Mumme, *The Śrīvaiṣṇava Theological Dispute: Manavalamamuni and Vedānta Deśika* (Madras: New Era Publications, 1988), p. 74, and Vasudha Narayanan, "Karma, Bhaktiyoga, and Grace in the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition: Rāmānuja and Karattalvān," and "Bondage and Grace in the Śrīvaiṣṇava Tradition: Pillai Lokācārya and Vedānta Deśika," in: Carter, John Ross, ed. *Of Human Bondage and Divine Grace*, pp. 57-73 and pp. 75-94.

⁴⁸ The more conservative Vadgalai school was associated with the teachings of Vedānta Deśika (1268-1369), who followed the tendency of the great majority of bhakti schools in maintaining that a mixed pattern of religious activity would be required for liberation, combining ritual, conscious devotion, and caste observance.

⁴⁹ Vadgalai was called the "monkey school" because in the same way that an infant monkey must hold onto its mother's fur in order to be carried, it taught that some voluntary effort by the devotee of God/Sri/Nārayāna was required in order to combine with the activity of God and result in liberation. Tengalai, on the other hand, was called the "cat school," because in the same way that a kitten is picked up by its mother by the back of the neck, with no effort or intention on its part, it taught that ultimately no voluntary effort on the part of the devotee was needed in order for the devotee to be taken to liberation.

⁵⁰ Mumme, pp. 75-95. Tengalai teaching has a logical structure practically identical to that of Shin Buddhism (interestingly enough, Pillai was Shinran's near contemporary). Tengalai prapatti was supposed to modify the relationship with a variety of formal religious behaviors. Ritual acts (karmas, which included the study of scripture, offerings of flowers, prayers, and expiations) were not supposed to be done as matter of detached obligation, but out of the free and spontaneous expression of devotion. For example, prayers should be ardent, but brief; they served only to appeal for bhakti and jñāna. In addition, proper family life and sexuality were sanctioned, astrology and magic were criticized, extremes of asceticism were avoided, right livelihood was practiced, overanxiety about life and death was avoided, animal

sacrifice was abjured, and so on. (See John C. Plott, *A Philosophy of Devotion: a Comparative Study of Bhakti and Prapatti in Viśistāvaita and St. Bonaventura and Gabriel Marcel* (Dehli: Motilal Banarsiādass, 1974), pp. 253-258.)

⁵¹ A.K. Ramanujan, trans., *Speaking of Siva* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1973), pp. 53-54. See also Karine Schomer, "Introduction: The Sant Tradition in Perspective," in: Karine Schomer and W.H. McLeod, eds. *The Sants: Studies in a Devotional Tradition of India* (Berkeley: Berkeley Religious Studies Series, 1987), pp. 2, 8, and John Stratton Hawley and Mark Juergensmeyer, *Songs of the Saints of India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

⁵² Of course, within the Indian setting Hinduism and Buddhism had different foci. Hinduism was inseparable from the varna system and its assumptions about the special cosmic role of brahmins in mediating religious power. Classical Buddhism rejected the concept of the inherited brahminical priesthood, but partly substituted in its place the monastic sangha, which tended to achieve a similar cosmological mediating role and linkage with temporal political power. (See Stanley Tambiah, *World Conqueror, World Renouncer: A Study of Buddhism and Polity in Thailand Against a Historical Background* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).)

⁵³ If the ordinary world, and our own persons, are already subsumed in the higher reality, how is it that our human experience is painful and flawed? Pure monistic positions are also paradoxical on a strictly logical basis. A great deal of effort in Hindu monistic philosophical thought was devoted to devices to explain away the apparent contradictions of experience, as in Śaṅkara's concept of maya and multiple levels of reality, but in practice such a recognition of the bipolarity of experience amounts to a bipolar doctrine anyway.

⁵⁴ Karl H. Potter, *Presuppositions of India's Philosophies* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1963), pp. 236-256. In fact, monisms smuggle bipolar structure into their overall patterns by means of institutional dyadism: monk-versus-lay relationships, or guru-and-disciple-versus-non-initiate relationships. Bipolar structure could be thus fixed in an opposition of specially authorized and legitimated social roles.

⁵⁵ Beyer, p. 340.

⁵⁶ Glenn E. Yocom, "Buddhism Through Hindu Eyes: Śaivas and Buddhists in Medieval Tamilnad," in: Slater, Peter and Donald Wiebe, eds. *Traditions in Contact and Change. Selected Proceedings of the XIVth Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions* (Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1980), pp. 143-162.

⁵⁷ Arvind Sharma, *Thresholds in Hindu-Buddhist Studies* (Calcutta: Minerva, 1979), pp. 64-82. Strong, p. 173 has noted that some Chinese Buddhist reactions to Confucian accusations against Buddhist unfiliality had antecedents in Indian Buddhist reactions to identical brahminical attacks.

⁵⁸ Interest in Buddhism was fading even before the Islamic invasions physically destroyed monastic centers in northern India. Perhaps the brahminical system was

better able to meet the lay people's need for ordinary ritual services (life cycle and crisis rites) whereas in Buddhism the emphasis of the lay role was on donation to institutions. Another argument holds that Buddhist identity tended to become fuzzy, for lay involvement in Buddhism blurred monasticism (especially as compared to the Jaina tradition) and Buddhist doctrines such as those about bodhisattvas were so flexible that they were vulnerable to assimilation by bhakti. (Padmanabh S. Jaini, "The Disappearance of Buddhism and The Survival of Jainism: A Study in Contrast," in: Narain, A.K., ed. *Studies in the History of Buddhism* (papers at International Conference on History of Buddhism at University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1980), pp. 81-91.)

⁵⁹ Strangely, ancient Buddhism probably began with an urban base and even made its initial appeal to merchant classes. See A.L. Basham, "The Background to the Rise of Buddhism," in: Narain, A.K., ed. *Studies in the History of Buddhism* (papers at International Conference on History of Buddhism at U of Wisconsin, Madison, 1980), p. 17; Narain, A.K. "Toward a New History of Buddhism," in: Narain, A.K., ed. *Studies in the History of Buddhism* (papers at International Conference on History of Buddhism at U of Wisconsin, Madison), pp. xv-xxxi; see also Trevor Ling, *The Buddha: Buddhist Civilization in India and Ceylon* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1973).

⁶⁰ Śrīvaiṣṇavism was saturated with normal brahminical authority elements. The teachings were mediated by guru-based teacher-disciple networks. The āchārya and the initiation he provided remained crucial and lineage organization essential. Women were still discriminated against. Even for Tengalai brahmins, ritual observance was exactly like that for other Hindu brahmins, although in principle the āchārya could come from any caste. See K. Gnanambal, "Śrīvaiṣṇavas and Their Religious Institutions," *Bulletin Anthropological Survey of India*, vol. 20, pp. 97-187 (July-Dec 1971); Kadambi Rangachariar, *The Sri Vaishnava Brahmans* (Madras, 1931); Patricia Y. Mumme, "Rules and Rhetoric: Caste Observance in Śrīvaiṣṇava Doctrine and Practice," *Journal of Vaiṣṇava Studies*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 113-133 (Winter 1993) and "The Evolution of the Tenkalai Understanding of the Ācārya: Teacher, Mediator and Savior" (Unpublished paper from the International Śrīvaiṣṇava Conference, Bombay, December 1988-January 1989). On Lingāyat assimilation into brahmanical patterns see William McCormack, "On Lingāyat Culture," in: Ramanujan, *Speaking of Siva*, pp. 175-187.

⁶¹ The Kabir panth ("sect") should in theory have been the most socially reformist because of the relationship to Kabir, but see David N. Lorenzen, "The Kabir Panth: Heretics to Hindus," in: David N. Lorenzen, ed. *Religious Change and Cultural Domination* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1981), pp. 151-171; Lorenzen, "The Social Ideologies of Hagiography: Śaṅkara, Tukārām and Kabir," in: Milton Israel and N.K. Wagle, eds. *Religion and Society in Maharashtra* (Toronto: Univer-

sity of Toronto Centre for South Asian Studies, 1987), pp. 92-114; and Lorenzen, "The Kabir-Panth and Social Protest," in: Schomer, ed. *The Sants*, pp. 281-303.

⁶² The historical situation here is of course extremely complex; the arrival of Islam, which offered Indians a way out of the caste system, may have historically preempted certain developments in bhakti and also by rallying Hindus around Hinduism prevented more internal diversification.

⁶³ Viz. Machida, pp. 20, 38-39.

⁶⁴ Hinduism essentially dealt with the ultimate quiescent power center at the heart of creation, a set of metaphysical and religious notions psychologically allied to the goals of the renunciant who learned altered states of consciousness allowing withdrawal deep into noncognitive reaches of the mind. Hinduism tended to expect that this power center could not be truly fully experienced by anyone except a meditator or specialist, although non-meditators could interact with the periodic release of accumulated power, especially through contact with deities in darśana or in possession. (See, e.g., Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *Asceticism and Eroticism in the Mythology of Siva* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973).) Buddhism, on the other hand, dealt with the ultimately interrelated nature of all phenomena, a goal not essentially defined by withdrawal from ordinary phenomena but by an ongoing state of more fluid participation in them. In Buddhism, meditation aimed not to accumulate power but to open the mind to the world of interdependence. In short, the nonrenunciant approach has been in most respects actually more intelligible for Buddhism than for bhakti.

BOOK REVIEWS

STEPHEN A. GELLER, *Sacred Enigmas: Literary Religion in the Hebrew Bible*—London: Routledge, 1996 (VIII, 224 p.), ISBN 0-415-12771-8 (cloth), £40.00.

Among the new methods used in biblical studies, literary approaches, psychoanalysis, and feminist readings figure prominently. Until recently, these approaches were generally believed to supplement, rather than supplant traditional historical-critical ones. However, what no one has suspected even a decade ago, many adepts of biblical studies have now opted out of historical approaches believing, as they do, that there are not enough hard facts available to warrant the historical enterprise. Just attend any biblical studies conference in Europe, North America, or Israel, and you will find yourself in the turmoil of the relevant debates. Some of Geller's papers could well have given the impression that his interest is with "the Bible as literature" rather than "the Bible as history." However, the present collection of essays puts the record straight: Geller, and with him the biblical department of New York's Jewish Theological Seminary, is still interested in history. Geller belongs to those who, far from exaggerating the historicity of biblical traditions, stir a middle course between "too much" and "too little" history. The historical frame into which he sets the seven papers of the present collection is vaguely (but sensibly) the one which originated "next door," i.e., in Columbia University's department of Ancient History where, until recently, the late Morton Smith was the dominant figure. With Morton Smith (and, of course, Julius Wellhausen) Geller believes the book of Deuteronomy to provide the biblical canon with its leading voice, and that this book's insistence on the exclusive worship of one deity originated ultimately with the prophets. While Deuteronomy pushes the idea of God's transcendence to its limits (as Geller ably demonstrates in his careful reading of Deut 4), the priestly authors aimed at subverting the Deuteronomic rationalism by rescuing as much mystery as was still possible (see Geller's chapter on the "blood cult"). Geller emerges as an interpreter

who creatively combines literary sensitivity with a clear historical perspective.

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VINCIAINE PIRENNE-DELFORGE, *L'Aphrodite grecque. Contribution à l'étude de ses cultes et de sa personnalité dans le panthéon archaïque et classique* (Kernos Supplément 4)—Athens, Liège, 1994 (XII, 527 p.), ISSN 0776-3824.

There are only few monographs on single Greek gods, a lack for which there are two reasons: (1) The material is abundant. The four volumes of Cook's *Zeus* deter any student from emulating such a monument and restricting oneself to a single life-long task. And (2) a monograph on one god only tempts the author to create a theology thus tearing apart the web of polytheism and its social foundations.

In her *Aphrodite* (a *thèse* submitted at Liège) Pirenne-Delforge [P-D] presents all material about the local cults of the goddess, taking Pausanias as a guide through the Greek regions. That is, she does not discuss Aphrodite's image in literature or in fine art (which is now collected in the LIMC article), but rather comments upon the presentation of the local context given in Pausanias and confronts it with the evidence from literal, epigraphical and archaeological sources as well as modern studies. The result is an admirably comprehensive documentation on Aphrodite in Greece (pp. 15-308). Following the ancient guide P-D discusses only in passing the material from the islands, from *Magna Graecia*, and the colonies. Indispensable, however, are the cults in Cyprus, which are presented with the same expertise on pp. 309-369. The Greeks were ever-aware that Aphrodite was the goddess of Cyprus, the *Kypria* (as Athena was the goddess of Athens). It seems prudent that P-D set aside the question of the origin of the Greek goddess, focusing instead on the enormous differences between the local cults. Local gods and goddesses attract functions and domains that belong to other gods in the other local Greek *panthea* or in the national *pantheon* as reflected in literature. The case of Lokroi, presented by C. Sourvinou-Inwood (1978),

has made that evident; P-D's documentation corroborates this conclusion, but she does not recognize the enormous consequences for the study of Greek religion originating in local feasts, cults, and gods. A list of the *epikleseis* can be found in the excellent indexes. In her *synthèse* (pp. 371-465) P-D turns her attention to the common signs and characteristics of the goddess: her attributes, like the apple and the dove; her function as goddess of love (before and beyond marriage) and in connection with war; the relationships to other gods, especially Ares. Only in the final pages, the *conclusions* (pp. 467-472), P-D tends to smooth out the differences. A comprehensive bibliography of 24 pages completes the work.

I would disagree with some explanations, e.g. concerning Aphrodite in weapons. This aspect of the goddess is more than just a structuralist counterpart to her true nature as goddess of love. She represents sexual desire—wild, unbound sex, more than sex in marriage; like her counterpart, Ares, represents the wild, unbound fighter, not the soldier. Young women before marriage represented their equality with young men through role reversal presenting themselves as amazon-like. Hence the social group determined the choice of the martial representation of the goddess (in contrast to Athena in weapons). Furthermore, images of oriental goddesses, especially Ishtar (see G. Colbow, *Die kriegerische Ištar*, München, 1991; S. Böhm, *Die nackte Göttin*, Mainz, 1990), naked and/or armed, influence essential factors of Aphrodite's image in the Greek imagination. I also come to a different reconstruction of the festival *Hybristica* at Argos (in my forthcoming book on Argive local religion, ch. 5). But since P-D gives a clear, unconstrained presentation of the ancient evidence and the modern discussion, the reader can draw his or her own conclusions. If the issue of oriental connections, regarding both the origin and synchronic influence, and Aphrodite beyond mainland Greece are considered, then some of her conclusions must be changed. A balanced overview is given in the article by F. Graf in DDD, 1995, pp. 118-125.

A whole century after Farnell's chapters on Aphrodite in his *Cults of the Greek States* (vol. 2, 1896, pp. 618-730) we now have a modern monograph on the cults of Aphrodite, a valuable handbook for Greek religion.

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W.A.R. SHADID and P.S. VAN KONINGSVELD (Eds.), *Muslims in the Margin: Political Responses to the Presence of Islam in Western Europe*—Kampen: Kok Pharos Publishing House, 1996 (288 p.), ISBN 90-390-0520-6 (pbk.), DFL 69.00.

This anthology on European responses to Islam represents yet another sign of the growing importance of Islam in Europe. Numerous studies have tried to analyze and propose how Europe and Muslims ought to deal with each other. As the title suggests, this book focuses on how Europeans, more especially European states, have responded to Islam. The anthology contains rich data on the many different ways in which Muslims are viewed by their official hosts.

The editors have promised that the view from Islam and Muslims forms the subject of a later companion volume. One cannot help the feeling that the promised second part, or some portions thereof, should have been in this book as well. I do not only mean the contributions from Muslim spokespersons, which may also shed light on the debate, but rather the analyses of the transformations and self-definitions of the mosque organizers and religious leaders within the growing and emerging Muslim communities. As it is, the book represents a European discourse of the state as it comes to terms with a religious community regarded as strange, often refusing to assimilate, integrate or emigrate. It seems to me that the presence of Muslims representing an extreme anti-pole ethnically, culturally and religiously, challenges the democracies of Europe. The state responses, as attested to in this volume, are less than satisfactory. However, what is missing is what Muslims make of these responses and how they see themselves as immigrants, or religious communities. The article by Leman and Renaerts on Muslims in Belgium, at least, begins to identify the changing discourse towards the state. Like the others, however, it does not delve into the nature of discourse on the part of Muslims as such. The absence of this second part gives most of the articles a sense of being brilliant monologues.

The anthology presents detailed analyses of how West European states deal with the presence of Muslims. There is a heavy dose of case studies in the Netherlands (4 out of 14) which is sometimes too specific for a general readership. On the other hand, these detailed studies reveal how the Muslim subject has emerged in modern Europe political discourse. In most cases, Muslim communities receive attention as refugees or ethnic minorities, and not specifically as religious communities. In many instances, there is

clearly a confusion between how Muslims present themselves as religious communities whilst European states are bound by specific models of what religions ought to be in modern states.

Apart from the case studies, there are more general contributions as well. Ballard reiterates the now familiar theme of Islam as the anti-pole of European identity. Tibi suggests that Europe should not follow the example of India by granting Muslims a separate legal space; while Herbert argues to the contrary in a separate article that MacIntyre's model of plural rationalities may be more fruitful than Habermas' differentiation between social system and life worlds. The ability of Muslims to establish a social life world, combining the separate systems of Habermas, is brilliantly raised by Pedersen for his study of Islam in Denmark. Finally, in a fine but quaint essay, Waardenburg speculates on how Muslims in Europe may be able to liberate themselves from their dhimmi (protected) status. All in all, an excellent anthology, but one which should be read with its future partner.

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KEITH STEVENS, *Chinese Gods: The Unseen World of Spirits and Demons*—
London: Collins & Brown 1997 (192 p.) ISBN 1-85028-409-1, £ 25.00.

The statement that there may be more Chinese gods (in the Chinese sense of the term: *shen*, *kuei*, deities, demons, spectres, members of the heavenly as well as underworld bureaucracy) “on the other side” than Chinese humans on earth is possibly a slight exaggeration, but after all every human being is a candidate for “euhemerization,” i.e., a potential deity whose help can be invoked and/or dangerous ghost that has to be pacified. Unlike de Groot who, in his pioneering “Annual Feasts,” chose the *prima facie* more mechanical sequence of the Fujian ritual calendar, Mr. Stevens presents his material in a more systematic and synoptic way: iconography; temples and altars; creation and prehistory; stellar deities of fate and destiny; gods of health, sickness and medicine; marriage and childbirth; wealth and success; agriculture and nature; seas and rivers; the underworld and the dead; Confucian, Taoist and Buddhist deities and their bureaucracies etc. The well-written text is of two types: surveys of the aforementioned subjects, and short explana-

tory paragraphs accompanying each of the several hundred (colour-plate!) pictures not only of deities but also of ritual activities.

The author, who served for many decades as a British colonial civil servant stationed in Hong Kong, used his time and unique opportunities to go with a toothcomb through the temples of popular religion in the south of China (*minnan* in the widest sense: Fujian, Hong Kong, Taiwan) and wherever communities originating there (as in Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia) still preserved their cultic traditions. Academic sinological ethnography makes more use of texts (gazetteers, hagiographies etc.) and is generally focused on particular deities and on a limited area, and confined to 2-3 years of field-work. Steven's work is more wide-ranging both in space (southern China) and time (several decades). A taoist temple in the Philippines may also have a statue of *Santa Maria* or Baby Jesus in good Latin American Roman Catholic style on a side-altar. "All deities have human biographies," but some "are so short as to be virtually of little value," whilst others are "so complicated by local variations that the story is difficult to unravel." His collection, of which only a selection could be presented in this book, contains close to 2000 pieces and his text is of special value as it is based not only on the *Feng-shen Yen-i*, the "Lives of Eminent Monks" and the like, but on thousands of interviews, many of which were conducted at intervals of years in the same temples. Did temple custodians and staff, priests, god-carvers and worshippers give the same explanations and refer to the same legends in 1960 and 1980? One important source of information has unfortunately dried up as "street storytellers have disappeared from ... tea houses" where "television has led to their redundancy" (p. 18). The author insists that north of the Yangtze iconography and legend can be very different (unless local gods "make it" to the imperial cult), and that due to the homogenization of iconographic representation many items are (and will remain) not only "unprovenanced" but also unidentified, as many members of the folk-pantheon lack specific and individual (one might say "canonical") features that would render more precise identification possible. Often the context or the tradition of the temple is of help, and some deities are "easily identifiable." To give a western analogy: a figure in a brown habit is not enough. But if the saint depicted has stigmata and preaches to birds we know for sure that it is St. Francis and not St. Antony of Padua. The Chinese situation is complicated by the fact that, as the author points out, different legends are often told about the

same god, and identical legends are often told about different gods. Hence the brief accounts accompanying the pictures should not always be taken as the last or the only word on its subject. Unfortunately, moreover, many of the colour-plates could be better and are often too small with the result that their correspondence to the accompanying text is not clear at all. The author also includes some recent images "made after the Cultural Revolution."

There are plenty of amusing details. We learn that a photograph taken in the kitchen of the late Chairman Mao's mother reveals that she had some dozen images there, though—with the exception of Kuan Yin—they could not be identified. Hai Juai (p. 160) a high-ranking Ming official renowned for his integrity and rectitude, who also became the popular hero of a huge novel and of a Peking opera, was noted by the author on a side-altar in a temple in Singapore. He was also used by Mao as a symbol for his fallen rival P'eng Chen, mayor of Peking and the first high-ranking party-member to be purged during the Cultural Revolution. Other deities too have a modern history. Lü Tung-pin (one of the most colourful of the Eight Immortals) was regarded by the Taiwanese during the Pacific War as a guardian against American bombing raids. Together with Kuan-yü and Ma-tsu he was renowned for the diversion of bombers away from Taipeh, and even the defusion of bombs already dropped (p. 77). An elderly god-carver in a Kowloon backstreet explained to the author that as a Roman Catholic he viewed these images with disdain, but he sympathized with the needs of his customers and provided for them in spite of the remonstrations of his parish priest. These few random examples should suffice to show the interest of the incidental information to be gleaned from this volume.

This is an eminently readable, enjoyable and instructive book. Although ostensibly written by a most knowledgeable layman for laymen, and although published in the format of a "coffee-table album" (23 × 30 cm), it should be found most helpful also by academic professionals. It would be unfair to expect from this kind of publication what scholars will miss most: a minimum bibliography of at least standard monographs on the deities shown (e.g., Brigitte Berthier's study of the Lady of Lin-shui described pp. 120-121). On the other hand the index of the deities' names and titles in Wade-Giles, Pinyin and Chinese characters should enhance the value of the book also to non-lay readers. Customers of bookshops, aware of today's

prices of even unillustrated books, will find *Chinese Gods* with its hundreds of colour-plates one of the best bargains ever.

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PROGRAM FOR THE ANALYSIS OF RELIGION AMONG LATINOS STUDIES SERIES. New York: Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies, The City University of New York. Vol. I: ANTHONY M. STEVENS-ARROYO and ANA MARÍA DÍAZ-STEVENS (Eds.), *An Enduring Flame: Studies on Latino Popular Religiosity*, 1994 (219 p.), ISBN 0-929972-07-4, \$29.95; Vol. II: ANTHONY M. STEVENS-ARROYO and GILBERT CADENA (Eds.), *Old Masks, New Faces: Religion and Latino Identities*, 1995 (196 p.), ISBN 0-929972-09-0, \$29.95; Vol. III: ANTHONY M. STEVENS-ARROYO and ANDRES I. PÉREZ Y MENA (Eds.), *Enigmatic Powers: Syncretism with African and Indigenous People's Religions Among Latinos*, 1995 (208 p.), ISBN 0-929972-11-2, \$29.95; Vol. IV: ANTHONY M. STEVENS-ARROYO with SEGUNDO PANTOJA (Eds.), *Discovering Latino Religion: A Comprehensive Social Science Bibliography*, 1995 (142 p.), ISBN 0-929972-13-9, \$29.95.

For many members of the International Association for the History of Religions, the XVIIth Congress of the IAHR in Mexico City served as an introduction to research in religion that is being undertaken by our Latin American colleagues. What we discovered, of course, was a rich tradition and corpus of research in religion largely neglected by European—including US and Canadian—scholars since, in these contexts, Spanish has not been emphasized as an “academic” language. The four volumes published by The Program for the Analysis of Religion Among Latinos (PARAL) now make available to non-Spanish speakers three volumes of studies by Latino scholars together with a comprehensive bibliography of research on Latino religion.

It is important, first of all, to distinguish research by Latinos about “Latino” religion from the study of religion in Latin and South America

generally. PARAL focuses exclusively on the “experience of people of Latin American descent living with the 50 states [of the United States] and Puerto Rico.” The experiences and religious formations of these people as minorities in a dominant culture are, of course, different from those in Latin and South America, especially as regards questions of identity.

The choice of the designation “Latino” is an attempt to capture some of the cultural complexity occasioned by Latin American immigration into the United States. An alternative designation, “Hispanic,” for example, refers to “things, places and persons somehow related to Spain” but “subordinates the Amerindian and African components that contribute to the variations of Spanish culture proper to this hemisphere” [II: 11]. There are, nevertheless, a number of shared themes that characterize the research on religion by South Americans, Latin Americans and Latinos. These themes, born of a common colonial history, include those addressed by the three PARAL volumes: Volume I on popular religion, with many analogies to their emergence in Latin and South America generally; Volume II on the integral relationship between religion and collective identity; and Volume III on “syncretism”—between various indigenous populations, between indigenous populations and Spanish conquerors, between indigenous and European populations and African slaves. Although the contributions to all three volumes of the series represent a combination of theoretical reflections, case studies, and literary and theological essays, those to Volumes I and III are the most valuable from a theoretical point of view.

While admitting the artificiality of separating the theme of popular religion from that of syncretism, the series editor, Stevens-Arroyo, suggests that “popular religion” carries more a sense of “the inclination to be religious” whereas it was considered useful to limit “syncretism” to a description of “the material aspects of a people’s traditions or practices” [I: 10]. Despite this interesting distinction, the concerns and conclusions of Volumes I and III largely overlap.

Popular religion (*religiosidad popular*) is considered to be a “defining characteristic” of Latino religious experience in the United States [I: 19]. It is defined as a form of personal expression that is outside ecclesiastical control, more involved with social and cultural identity, resists assimilation, and negotiates cultural including material goals. From an official, or even scholarly perspective, the category of popular religion, like that of syncretism assumes “orthodoxy” or some representation of purity [I: 114]. Similarly,

Gustavo Benavides offers a theoretical challenge to the validity of the category “syncretism” itself. Noting its always “unspoken point of reference” to power and legitimacy, Benavides, who also contributed an important analysis of popular religion in Volume I, challenges the usefulness of this category because of its always “unspoken point of reference” to power and legitimacy [III: 37].

The contributions to Volume III are predominantly case studies, including two very interesting studies of *santería*. The brief contribution by Meredith McGuire to Volume I on “Linking Theory and Methodology for the Study of Latino Religiosity” might be given special mention in this context. McGuire notes oversights by “mainstream” social scientists in their use of survey data and in their subsequent construction of case studies when studying non-mainstream expressions of religiosity such as that exemplified by Latino religion.

The weakest of the three volumes from a strictly theoretical perspective is the second. While its theme of “Latino Identities” is central to all three volumes, its essays are largely anecdotal, ideological and theological. As Stevens-Arroyo clarifies in his Introduction to this volume, “while there is a great deal of social analysis in contemporary theology, this does not constitute sociological analysis.... Theology uses different rules for evidence ... based on personal experience.” He concludes, however, that “[t]he subjective factors that are included in the theological definitions of liberation and transformation are not aethereal categories totally disconnected from the kinds of issues that lie at the core of social science” [II: 17]. In other words, the more subjective essays in this volume, as do those in the other two, contribute an interesting and sometimes valuable insight into the experiences of Latinos of which the more theoretical and empirical studies seek to make sense.

Volume IV of the series offers a comprehensive bibliography of scholarship by and about Latinos. In contrast to the European history-of-religions tradition which developed out of liberal Protestantism, religious scholarship in Latin and South America generally has developed in the context of, and often in opposition to, Catholicism and is predominantly social scientific or theological—the first two divisions of Volume IV. The volume includes also helpful bibliographies of “Reports, Documents, Unpublished Papers and Bibliographies” and “Theses and Dissertations.” The Introductions to the four volumes by Stevens-Arroyo provide a commendable coherence for the entire project.

The four volumes of the PARAL series can be recommended to historians of religion for the richness of both their theoretical contributions and for the insights of their case studies. Not only will they provide data for comparative studies that is not always readily available, but the theoretical questions they raise, both implicitly and explicitly, make a contribution to our larger task as well.

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Conference Reports

Book Reviews

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IAHR CONGRESS IN DURBAN

ARMIN W. GEERTZ

The Executive Committee of the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR) decided at its recent annual meeting in Turku, Finland to hold the XVIIIth Quinquennial Congress during August 5-12, 2000 in Durban, South Africa. This particular congress will be a special event for a number of reasons. First, it will be the first IAHR congress ever held on the African continent. Second, it coincides with the 50th anniversary of the founding of the IAHR in Amsterdam. And, third, it will also mark the 100th anniversary of scientific congresses in the history of religions.

The congress will be organized in cooperation with a professional congress organizing company, Turners Conference Ltd., which will take advantage of the internet to improve the servicing of registration, abstracts, and so on. The actual venue will be the International Convention Centre Durban. The Convention Center was inaugurated during August 1997 and is one of the best and most modern convention centers in the world. Every care will be taken to ensure that scholars from all over the world will be able to live in Durban according to their means, and already now the congress organizers are conducting a fund-raising campaign to help relieve cost burdens. Furthermore, the convention center and congress hotels lie in an area of the city where every precaution is taken to ensure the safety of visitors to Durban.

Durban is situated on the eastern coast of South Africa by the Indian Ocean. With its tropical climate at the end of the South African winter, congress participants will find the weather pleasant and enjoyable. Durban is also a city of immense cultural and religious diversity, and the congress organizers are developing a program which

will give congress participants the possibility of experiencing this diversity first-hand.

The theme of the congress will be "The History of Religions: Origins and Visions." The organizers are currently working on a very attractive academic program which will ensure coverage of the methodological and theoretical implications of the theme as well as of South African religions in particular and African religions in general. There will furthermore be sections, symposia and panels on all major aspects of the history of religions and cognate disciplines. The first circular is expected to be out by the end of this year.

The IAHR will be inaugurating a new conception of IAHR congresses in connection with Durban 2000. Earlier congresses were generally the sole responsibility of the hosting IAHR affiliate, but with Durban 2000, the IAHR shares equally with the local organizers both burdens and benefits. The new congress organizational structure will be detailed further in the up-coming issue of the IAHR Bulletin.

Please send inquiries to the Congress Director, Prof. Pratap Kumar, Department of Science of Religion, University of Durban-Westville, Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000 South Africa (e-mail: kumar@pixie.udw.ac.za) or to the General Secretary of the IAHR, Prof. Armin W. Geertz, Department of the Study of Religion, University of Aarhus, Main Building, DK-8000 Aarhus C, Denmark (e-mail: geertz@teologi.aau.dk).

NEW FROM MOHR: How can Roman Religion be Defined, and what was its Political and Cultural Meaning?

Römische Reichsreligion und Provinzialreligion

Herausgegeben von Hubert Cancik und Jörg Rüpke

The authors of this volume offer a reappraisal of the history of the term 'Roman religion' and give a precise definition of the terms 'imperial religion' and 'provincial religion'. They examine preconceived assumptions regarding the political function of religions in the pre-modern empire and elaborate on the existing descriptions of religions in ancient societies and intercultural or interreligious encounters. Case studies used as examples for the eastern and western parts of the Roman Empire round off the picture. The authors thus close the research gap that existed between the history of religion in Rome and the cultural history of the provinces.

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Mohr Siebeck

Envisioning Magic

A Princeton Seminar and Symposium

Edited by Peter Schäfer and Hans G. Kippenberg

This collection of twelve articles presents a selection of papers delivered in the course of a seminar 1994-95 and its concluding international symposium at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton.

The common theme is the interrelation between magic and religion, focusing particularly on the Mediterranean world in Antiquity - Egyptian, Graeco-Roman and Jewish beliefs and customs - but also treating the early modern period in Northern Europe (the Netherlands and Germany) as well as offering more general reflections on elements of magic in language and Jewish mysticism. The volume is characterized by an interdisciplinary approach and the use of varied methodologies, emphasizing the dynamic nature of the often contradictory forces shaping religious beliefs and practices, while dismissing the idea of a linear development from magic to religion or vice versa.

The contributors are outstanding scholars in their fields: Ancient, Medieval and Modern History, Religious Studies, Jewish Studies, Classical Studies, Early Christianity, Islamic Studies, Anthropology, Egyptology and Comparative Literature. Without a doubt this re-evaluation of a fascinating age-old subject will stimulate scholarly discussion and appeal to educated non-specialist readers as well.

Readership: Those interested in the history of religions, the history of magic, intellectual history and church history.

Peter Schäfer, Dr.phil. (1968) in Jewish Studies, Habilitation 1973, is Professor of Jewish Studies and Director of the Institut für Judaistik at the Freie Universität Berlin. He has published extensively on Jewish literature and history in late antiquity and on early Jewish mysticism. His most recent book is *Judeophobia. Attitudes toward the Jews in the Ancient World*, (Harvard University Press, 1997).

Hans G. Kippenberg, Dr. phil., University of Göttingen, secured his habilitation at the Freie Universität Berlin, held the chair for Comparative religion at the University of Groningen from 1977 to 1989, and currently holds the chair at Bremen. He is the editor of *Numen* (Brill, Leiden).

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 B R I L L

CLOSE HARMONIES: THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION IN DUTCH *DUPLEX ORDO* THEOLOGY, 1860-1960

JAN G. PLATVOET

Summary

In this article, the history of the Science of Religion in the Netherlands in the period 1860 to 1960 is surveyed at the time when it was an integral part of Dutch liberal academic theology as pursued in the faculties of theology at the universities of Leiden, Groningen, Utrecht and Amsterdam. In 1876, these faculties were given a special statute, the so-called *duplex ordo*, in a law that separated the 'confessional' theological disciplines from the 'scientific' ones. It also introduced the new disciplines of the Science of Religion and the Philosophy of Religion into these reconstituted faculties. I discuss Tielemans's plan to make the Science of Religion their central discipline, and why it was ultimately given only a marginal place in them. My main concern, however, is to outline the theology which inspired the Science of Religion of Tielemans, Chantepie, Van der Leeuw and Bleeker and to demonstrate its 'close harmony' with the liberal theology prevailing in these *duplex ordo* faculties, as also in at least some of the modalities of the *Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk* whose ministers were trained, again by law, in these faculties. It was that close harmony which allowed Van der Leeuw to disregard the *duplex ordo* and to establish a full harmony between the Science of Religion and confessional theology. I also discuss dissonant voices, Kraemer's especially, calling for the abrogation of the *duplex ordo* and the integration of the Science of Religion into a militantly confessional theology.

Vom Christentum aus unsern Blick auf die Welt der historischen Religionen richtend, meinen wir zu sehen, daß das Evangelium sich zeigt als Erfüllung der Religion überhaupt.¹

The main thesis of this article is that 'Science of Religion'² was part and parcel of academic liberal theology in the Netherlands from its inception in the 1860s until 1960. To document it, the theologies undergirding the Sciences of Religion of Tielemans, Chantepie, Van der Leeuw and Bleeker are discussed; and those of some other Dutch scholars of religions of that same period are also briefly indicated.

I also will discuss the institutional structure, known as *duplex ordo*, established by the Dutch parliament in 1876. It separated ‘academic’ theology from ‘confessional,’ or church-tied theology and, and at the same time, introduced the new discipline of Science of Religion into the Faculties of Theology of the Universities at Leiden, Groningen, Utrecht and Amsterdam. I conclude by discussing the protests voiced against the *duplex ordo* by Gunning and Kraemer in their pleas for a re-confessionalisation of academic theology and Science of Religion.

Tiele's Strategy

When the Arminian minister C.P. Tiele (1830-1902) used the term *godsdiestwetenschap*, ‘Science of Religion,’ for the first time in 1866, he did so in a programmatic rather than a descriptive sense. The term ‘Science of Religion’ was only just beginning to gain currency in German,³ French,⁴ English,⁵ and Dutch academic writing, and the newly emerging discipline had as yet nowhere been granted chairs.⁶ By this time, however, the discipline had already begun to create the scholarly identities with which it was to emerge as an academic discipline in continental universities in the last quarter of the 19th century. Tiele was undoubtedly one of its founders.⁷ From as early as 1860, he began to pursue an ambitious “strategy of conquest”⁸ not merely to establish Science of Religion as a new discipline in the (Leiden) Faculty of Theology, but to install it there as the very paradigm and centrepiece of what he called “scientific theology.”⁹

Tiele executed that strategy in three phases. He began in 1860 by publishing a caustic critique of the poor quality of J.H. Scholten’s teaching of History of Religions (*godsdiestgeschiedenis*) at the Leiden Faculty of Theology. At that time Scholten, together with Abraham Kuenen, was the most famous professor of theology in the Leiden Faculty. He taught New Testament, *theologia naturalis* (or *doctrina de deo*)¹⁰ and Dogmatic Theology and was the architect and undisputed leader of ‘modern theology,’ a new Leiden-based school of liberal theology that had been gaining popularity since 1848.¹¹

Its second phase ran from 1866 to 1867, when the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Arminian van Heemskerk, published the (first)

draft of a bill reorganising secondary and tertiary education in the Netherlands.¹² Tiele followed it up at once with two articles in which he outlined his concept of a Faculty of ‘Scientific Theology’ with Science of Religion as its central discipline. ‘Traditional theology,’ with its polemics, apologetics and dogmatics, was to be banned from it.¹³ The second of these articles was given a prominent place in the very first issue of the new Leiden-based *Theologisch Tijdschrift*.¹⁴ It meant that Tiele’s ideas met with considerable sympathy with the Leiden Faculty. It seems likely that the Leiden Faculty and Tiele continued to cultivated this mutual goodwill and understanding in the years that followed, as the third and crowning phase showed.

That phase ran from 1872 to 1877. In 1872, Tiele was granted a doctorate *honoris causa* by the Leiden Faculty. In 1873, following Tiele’s appointment as Rector of the Seminary of the small Arminian Church at Amsterdam, the seminary was moved to Leiden. Tiele presented his inaugural address as its Professor in the *Groot Auditorium*, ‘Great Hall,’ of Leiden University on 13 February 1873.¹⁵ The bill of 28 April 1876 reforming Dutch secondary and tertiary education having at long last been steered through Parliament by again van Heemskerk¹⁶ and having come into effect in 1877, Tiele was appointed Professor of History of Religions (and Philosophy of Religion)¹⁷ at the Leiden Faculty of Theology in 1877. Not only was his chair the first of its kind in the Netherlands but he was also the only academic from outside the *Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk* (NHK), the former Public Church, to be given a professorship in a faculty of theology at a Dutch State university.¹⁸

Tiele’s Scientific Theology

In his 1866 article, Tiele endowed Science of Religion with the mission to save theology from the “alien interests” of the churches. He branded confessional theology as “obscurantist supranaturalism,”¹⁹ of one kind with that ruling “in the twilight of [R.C.] seminaries or the darkness of [its] cloisters.”²⁰ The narrow-mindedness of theology tied to the confession of a church was, in Tiele’s view, the main

reason why a truly scientific, religion-tied theology had not yet been born. Theology should not be dependent on the “unscientific principle of [the] authority” of the particular faith of a specific church but on research. Comparison, he asserted, is “the foundation, the starting point, [and] the condition of all science.”²¹ By outlawing the comparative study of religions, the churches impeded the self-knowledge of their own brand of Christianity. The lack of information about “heathen” religions, and the speculative methods of confessional theology were two more reasons for the unscientific character of church-bound theology.²² The Science of Religion would restore theology’s “inner coherence” by founding it upon historical criticism and “the unbiased ascertaining and recording of facts.”²³ It now lacked coherence because it had been made to serve the needs of a particular church, especially that of the training of its future ministers, instead of being developed from the consistent concept of a scientific discipline.²⁴ The Science of Religion would constitute the religions of humankind as theology’s proper object of study and cause scientific theology to coincide with the Science of Religion by abrogating the distinction between natural and revealed religions and integrating the study of the biblical religions into that of the other religions of humankind.²⁵ It was the task of the Science of Religion to develop a body of theory about the religions of humankind in four stages. The first was to accurately describe all religions. The second was to compare them judiciously in order to develop a genealogy of all the families of the world’s religions. The third was to analyse them morphologically in order to determine into what stages of evolution the religions of humankind could be ordered²⁶ and to determine how far specific religions had travelled along that road. The final stage was their “physiological” and “psychological”²⁷ study in order to establish that faith and adoration constituted the innermost core of all religions, and that it was a fact of history that Christianity possessed these two in their highest form.²⁸ Tiele admonished the “small elite corps” of “modern” theologians who had exchanged “supranaturalism” for an independent theology, not to keep their studies separate from [the]

History of [Non-Christian] Religions, but to combine with it and constitute it into the "General Science of Religion."²⁹

Tiele's Close Harmony

The historical and comparative study of the religions of mankind was for Tiele, however, only the foundation of what he termed the study of "religion as such."³⁰ Humankind's religions are "the diverse expressions of religion lying dormant, as a disposition, in every human being." They are the "products of the human mind, [of which] religion is one of its properties," and one of its four faculties (the other three being to speak a language correctly, and the aesthetic and moral 'senses').³¹ In a later essay, he added the intellect as the fifth faculty of the human mind³² and argued that the origin of religion was not to be located in man's moral and religious feelings only.³³ That origin was to be explained by man's moral and religious feeling's being informed by his intellectual capacity for abstraction.³⁴ The feelings and emotions which man has in common with animals cannot, in themselves, explain religion and morality, these two being the distinctive and intimately connected features that make man into what he uniquely is. Intellect, moral sense and religious feeling together constituted the human conscience. Tiele regarded them as the ultimate source of religion (and morality). He defined conscience as "the feeling that we are bound by a moral world order,"³⁵ of which God is the lawgiver.³⁶ His laws have, on the one hand, been made known to man by human reason, and on the other hand by his conscience, which is the "feeling in the human heart for the laws of God." He also equated conscience with [God's] "Revelation," for the human conscience reveals that God's love "pulls at our hearts." This act of God revealing himself in "the most important organ of [human] perfectibility," the human heart, provokes in humans the need to adore God as the perfect love.³⁷

Tiele termed faith and the love of God the *godsdiestige grondkracht*, the "basic religious force," the source from which religion had sprung in every human being.³⁸ He regarded this "primeval force"³⁹

as the [scientific] explanation of religion, on the grounds that religion was rooted “in human nature” and “related most intimately to [man’s] innermost being.”⁴⁰ In fact, the very purpose of the Science of Religion, as a scientific discipline, was precisely “to explain this fact.”⁴¹ Tiele considered the Science of Religion, therefore, to be a multi-faceted enterprise. It was, he said, a Science of Man, or Anthropology, and a Science of the Human Mind, or Psychology; as well as a Natural Science, because, he said, man is religious “by nature.”⁴² He saw it, too, as a Philosophy of Religion.⁴³ As such, it could serve as scientific theology’s centrepiece and thus replace confessional theology. He assured his fellow academic theologians that all the disciplines that had progressed towards becoming truly “scientific” since 1800, could now be fully integrated into that philosophical Science of Religion.⁴⁴

Tiele developed an elaborate argument and two schemes to show that nothing of permanent scientific value would be lost from Aesthetic, Historical and Systematic Theology, as developed by ‘modern’ theologians, by their being integrated into the framework of Science of Religion as Scientific Theology. Only the irredeemably confessional disciplines of Apologetics, Polemics and Dogmatics were to be returned to the churches, “with thanks for the services they had rendered.”⁴⁵ The “purely philological” disciplines of Hermeneutics and Exegesis were to be returned to the Faculty of Arts & Philosophy. New Testament Exegesis ought to be studied in that faculty too, as part of Hellenistic Literature, rather than be placed in the Faculty of Theology.⁴⁶ Tiele offered two arguments against locating New Testament studies in the Faculty of Theology. “The books of the New Testament must not be explained by any other method than those used for the Old Testament, or the Koran, the Vedas, the Zend Avesta, the Edda, or even whatever other piece of ancient literature.” It would be strange too if New Testament Exegesis became the preserve of the Faculty of Theology, when Hebrew, Israelite antiquities, and the Exegesis of the Old Testament were all taught in the Faculty of Arts & Philosophy.⁴⁷ Tiele was referring here to the academic division of labour which had been standard in Dutch universities in the 18th

century when both Old and New Testament Exegesis had been the provinces of the professors of Eastern Languages and of Greek in the Faculty of Arts & Philosophy. Students at the Arminian, Baptist, and Lutheran Seminaries at Amsterdam had always attended the courses given by these professors in preference to those given in the Amsterdam Faculty of Theology even when the latter had begun to acquire a more prominent place in that faculty from the middle decades of the 19th century onwards, following the pioneer work done by Abraham Kuenen (1828-1891) in the field of Old Testament Exegesis in the Leiden Faculty of Theology.⁴⁸ Tiele was, therefore, actually proposing that the earlier model be reinstated. Under the law of 1876, however, both New and Old Testament Exegesis were assigned to the Faculties of Theology.

Tiele had decried confessional theology for serving the “alien interests” of the church and for being so preoccupied with the issues of ministerial formation that they caused theology to disintegrate into a set of disciplines without focus. It is, therefore, remarkable that he nonetheless included the subject of Practical Theology into his scheme of Scientific Theology. Tiele viewed Practical Theology as the applied science of Science of Religion. It was to reflect on how the body of theory developed by the Science of Religion could be used to reform and nurture the religion of Christians, through preaching and religious education, and on how these could be applied to the propagation of Christianity through mission. The aim of mission must, however, not be to eradicate other religions but to rather reform and refine them.⁴⁹

Tiele concluded the outline of his programme by quoting Scholten to the effect that it is the task of mortal man to learn what is *a priori* (i.e., metaphysically) true, by studying [natural and historical] reality *a posteriori* (i.e., as it is empirically). Tiele believed that man can ascend from knowledge gained by empirical observation, to an understanding of the eternal laws by which the universe is held together.⁵⁰ Empirical science served, in his view, as “the best defence of what is essential in religion and [as] the best justification of faith.”⁵¹ Tiele’s theology was, in tune with his age, an evolutionist one, which granted,

as a matter of course, the topmost position among the religions of mankind to this brand-new liberal Christianity. “Christianity meets the religious needs of the human heart better than any other religion and is therefore destined to become the religion of humanity.”⁵²

Tiele regarded his scientific theology as fully compatible with a rigorous conception of science.⁵³ At its heart, however, was his unflinching conviction that God had revealed himself to all humans alike, in their hearts and consciences, their minds and reasons,⁵⁴ and that the study of religions was not exhausted either by historical genealogies and morphologies, or by their social and psychological functions. The bedrock of his Science of Religion was a true theology in its own right.⁵⁵ It allowed him to establish a close harmony between his new Science of Religion, being mainly the study of the non-biblical religions, and the study of the biblical ones as pursued by the other ‘modern’ theologians working in the Leiden Faculty of Theology during the last three decades of the 19th century.

In the period under review, other Dutch historians of religions have developed their own close harmonies between the Science of Religion and their particular varieties of liberal Christian theology in Dutch *duplex ordo* faculties of theology. I will first describe that of Chantepie.

Chantepie’s Anti-Evolutionist Theology

Pierre Daniel Chantepie de la Saussaye (1848-1920) developed his close harmony in the shape of a philosophical theology of religion. He articulated it in his Ph.D. thesis, the first, and most likely the smallest,⁵⁶ ever in Dutch Science of Religion circles and he defended it before the Utrecht Faculty of Theology in 1871 at the age of 23. He called the Science of Religion, “th[e] youngest among the sciences,” and divided it into “the Science of Religion in general and in its special forms.” By the latter, he meant the historical study of single religions, and by the former their comparative, systematic and philosophical study.⁵⁷

If Tiele held that the “science of religion is as distinct from [confessional] theology as astronomy is from astrology, and chemistry

from alchemy,”⁵⁸ and protested sharply against the “alien interests” of the churches which held [scientific] theology in bonds, there was no such chafing against the reins of confessional theology apparent in Chantepie’s slim thesis. Nor did he strive to bring theology under the rule of Science of Religion. Though he held that the study of religions was of great use to theology, they were in his view distinct disciplines with different aims and methods.⁵⁹

In his thesis, Chantepie postulated three metaphysical axioms⁶⁰ as constituting the foundations of an “objective Science of Religion.” The first was that the relationship between the believer and God as practised in religion, was an objective one. Religion, he said, could not be an object of scientific research if God did not exist and if man had no innate disposition towards a relationship with him:

“If religion were only the representations, expectations, ambitions, affective moods, and deeds of men; if religion were only man seeking a relationship with a God who does not really exist, then it would [truly] have to be termed a disease of the human mind. No reality could then be attributed to religion, and it could hardly be an object of scientific research, because one would not be able to find objective truth in it.”⁶¹

Chantepie’s second assertion, therefore, is that God exists objectively.⁶² He knew that “God’s existence and his relationship to the world and to man cannot be proved,” yet held that “this postulate is the very foundation of the entire Science of Religion.” As the Science of Religion must necessarily enter “the realm of the unprovable” and religion finds its most objective explanation in God’s continuous activity for humankind, the Science of Religion “cannot but have a speculative element.” With Chantepie, that intuitive speculation took the shape of a (religious) philosophy of history.⁶³

The corollary of this second postulate, therefore, is that religion is as much the act of God revealing himself as of man responding to it; and that man has a spiritual nature and is religious by nature.⁶⁴ Religion was the spiritual faculty by which man could enter into a relation with God. Quoting Max Müller’s dictum, with approval, that man’s *sensus luminis* was also his *sensus numinis*, Chantepie believed that God spoke to all men in the phenomena of nature, but in par-

ticular in those of light. The unity of the human race was based on precisely this inborn common spirituality.⁶⁵ The anti-Darwinian corollary of this was that humans had been elevated by God above all (the rest of his) creation because of their unique religious nature. Chantepie held, therefore, that humankind could not have evolved from lower creatures.⁶⁶ He deemed Darwin's theory a "disorderly pile of hypotheses" which even plain common sense must dismiss.⁶⁷ Chantepie, therefore, refused to accept Darwinism "in its absolute form," i.e., as valid also for human spiritual evolution: humans, having religions, could not have evolved "from a lower species of beings without religion." That would contradict "the very simple rule that a religious being cannot evolve from a non-religious being."⁶⁸ He was, inclined, albeit cautiously, to accept the theory of primitive monotheism.⁶⁹

Chantepie's third axiom was that humankind's religious history represented the historical variation of the human response to God's three modes of revelation: in history, both to earliest humans and in the further course of history;⁷⁰ in nature;⁷¹ and in man's innermost being.⁷² Chantepie stressed God's revelation in nature for two reasons. First, because he shared Schleiermacher and Müller's view that man's *sensus luminis* was also his *sensus numinis*.⁷³ Secondly, because the same, one and only true God had revealed himself in both nature and history and this double dispensation must therefore be taken as one, its recipient, mankind, was also religiously a unity, its religions being based on this double dispensation. Moreover, Chantepie held that primitive monotheism had never been lost completely because of this unitary divine economy. However much it had been corrupted and adulterated in the course of history, it had nonetheless been preserved in a variety of forms and degrees, ranging from pure to impure. It had also been revived in the religion of Israel and in esoteric cults, and he asserted too that it "lies at the bottom of the heathen religions even now." The twofold divine revelation to humankind in history and in nature was at the heart of Chantepie's liberal *theologia religionum*. It enabled him to hold that "the religions of the heathens [have] objective value" in spite of all their apparent "corruption."⁷⁴

Chantepie also held that the origin of religion could only be explained by a speculative and intuitive philosophy of history that penetrated to the very ‘nature’ of religion. He did not bother about his theory’s circularity and the metaphysical assumptions on which it was founded, because, in his view, no one would ever be able to obtain empirical validation about the origin of humankind’s religions, or about anything else pertaining to the metaphysical realm which for Chantepie was the Absolute.⁷⁵

Chantepie versus Tiele

Siding with Max Müller against Darwinian evolutionism, Chantepie did not look favourably on Tiele’s aim to discover the laws of human religious evolution, on the grounds that the heart of religion, the interaction between God and man, was beyond empirical research. All attempts to find the laws of [religious] evolution, therefore, were bound to fail. Chantepie informed Tiele that “the time for writing a coherent history of religions has not yet arrived.” He was even more unhappy about Tiele explaining religion virtually exclusively from the *godsdiestige grondkracht* of humans, i.e., from man’s inherent religious nature, as he was also with Tiele’s consequent reduction of revelation to an inner subjective experience. As religion is a two-way affair between a real God and historical believers, the explanation of religion must always be twofold, detailing causality from both God and man’s religious nature. Tiele’s psychological explanation of the origin of religion arising from man’s innate religious disposition, was only the secondary and “subjective” one. Contrary to Renan and Tiele, Chantepie held that man’s religious nature is a necessary, but by itself insufficient explanation of religion. It does not in itself explain religion; it explains it only in combination with religion’s “objective” explanation: the existence, and active presence, of God.⁷⁶

Tiele versus Chantepie

In response, Tiele berated Chantepie for founding the scientific study of religions upon a religious hypothesis; for declaring it bind-

ing on scholars of religion; for keeping the Science of Religion in shackles forever; and for preventing it from following the laws binding upon all sciences. The Science of Religion must not keep a backdoor open to the “through and through unscientific theological [approach]:” it must exclude infinite causes and only look for finite ones. The problem of the origin of religion does not, as Chantepie contended, belong to metaphysical philosophy, which Tiele considered to be “the last stronghold of the old transcendental world view,” but rather to “the philosophy of anthropology.” Tiele suggested that the “simple” method of “observing and comparing the several religions and religious phenomena” be followed, in order to “establish what constitutes the essentially religious element in them.” Then one should inquire, “how this specifically religious content can be explained from what psychological inquiry has been able to establish about the nature of man.” Tiele believed, in fact, that it would establish that religion is “something that resides in man’s innermost spirit.” The “objective” elements of religion: doctrine, cult, and institution are only the externals of the essence of religion. Serious psychological research reveals that the inner essence, and origin, of religion are to be found in the depths of the human mind. For Tiele, then, the Science of Religion was part of “Psychology” (as was Linguistics!), Psychology being part again of [philosophical] “Anthropology.” He assigned to the Science of Religion the task of investigating religions as proceeding from the revelations received in the human heart, i.e., as psychological phenomena subject to definite laws.⁷⁷

The Duplex Ordo as Simplex Ordo

What Tiele actually achieved in 1876 was much more modest than what he had proposed in his two programmatic articles of 1866 and 1867. The Faculties of Theology at the Universities of Leiden, Groningen, Utrecht and Amsterdam were not converted into Faculties of Scientific Theology. Theology was not merged with Science of Religion for the study of all the religions of humankind, and confessional theology was not completely banned from them.⁷⁸ Instead, they

were given the *duplex ordo* structure according to the provisions of the law of 28 April 1876. It separated the church-bound disciplines of Dogmatic and Pastoral Theology⁷⁹ and its two professors appointed by the NHK church⁸⁰ from the faculties proper which comprised only the four or five professors appointed by "the Crown"⁸¹ to teach the ten subjects stipulated in that law.⁸²

The History of Religions was introduced into these faculties proper as merely one of those ten disciplines and held a marginal position in them for a number of reasons.⁸³ One was that apart from Tiele, who was appointed as its first chair holder in Leiden University in 1877,⁸⁴ and Chantepie, who was given the second chair in the University of Amsterdam in 1878, there were no Dutch scholars available to teach Science of Religion. Academics from other Protestant denominations had either to be recruited from abroad or the Science of Religion was taught by Philosophers of Religion. Tiele was succeeded by the Norwegian Lutheran, William Brede Kristensen, from 1901 to 1938; the German Lutheran minister and missionary in China, Heinrich Hackmann, occupied the Amsterdam chair from 1913 to 1934; and the Swiss Protestant, Benedict Hartmann, held the chair of Ancient Religions at Leiden from 1950 to 1987. The marginality of the Science of Religion is even more apparent from its being an appendix to the disciplines in the service of which it was emerging. They were first of all the core disciplines of modern[ist] theology: Natural Theology,⁸⁵ Philosophy of Religion,⁸⁶ and the Encyclopaedia of Theology, and secondly biblical studies.

In Groningen, G.H. Lamers, Professor of Philosophy of Religion from 1876 to 1883 when he moved to Utrecht, was also assigned to teach History of Religions. So was also his successor, I. van Dijk (1883-1917), though this Professor of History of Religions, Natural Theology, and the Encyclopaedia of Theology was not interested in any religion other than Christianity (although he did have a passionate interest in Socrates).⁸⁷ History of Religions was taught at Utrecht Faculty of Theology by the Professors of Philosophy of Religion and Ethics, G.H. Lamers (1883-1903) and H. Visscher (1903-1931).⁸⁸ This union of History of Religions with these two disciplines, was

seen as so normal and natural that historians of religions were often assigned to teach *doctrina deo* and/or the Encyclopaedia of Theology⁸⁹ (but never Philosophy of Religion).⁹⁰

The marginality of the Science of Religion is also apparent from the fact that Tiele, though he was also appointed Professor of Philosophy of Religion, did not actually teach that central subject until after 1892. Indeed, he would not have taught it at all if he had not run into a conflict with J.H. Gunning over the *duplex ordo* in 1891.⁹¹ Gunning, who was an articulate propagator of the more orthodox “ethical” modality in the Dutch Reformed Church, had been Professor of Dogmatic Theology at the Amsterdam Faculty since 1882. He had been appointed to the Leiden *duplex ordo* chair of Philosophy of Religion⁹² in 1889 by a government coalition of “confessional” political parties⁹³ against the express wishes of the Leiden Faculty.⁹⁴ Gunning held that theology should be tied to the faith of the church, and in particular to that of the local congregation of believers: it should conform with the way in which that congregation experiences the mystery of God. In 1890 and 1892, he published books in which he not only declared that (Christian) theology and the neutral science of religion were incompatible, but moreover specifically directed his attacks at his predecessor, the Leiden philosopher of religion, Rauwenhoff.⁹⁵ By thus publicly proclaiming a *simplex ordo* position and rejecting the *duplex ordo* of 1876, Gunning contravened, as the Leiden Professor of Philosophy of Religion, the ‘golden rule’ of freedom from [confessional] theology fundamental to the Leiden modern[ist] position and the Science of Religion as conceived by Tiele, thereby incurring Tiele’s wrath. Gunning admitted that he was unable and unwilling to teach Philosophy of Religion on the basis of the ‘neutral,’ modernist model established by Scholten, Kuennen and Tiele. The conflict was ‘resolved’ by Tiele, who had been teaching *doctrina deo* since Scholten’s retirement in 1881, and Gunning swapping their teaching assignments.⁹⁶

Lastly, the History of Religions in these faculties consisted mainly, if not exclusively, in study of the religions of ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the extra-biblical Semitic regions in order to explore

the *Umwelt* of the Bible, and of those of the Greek, Hellenistic and Latin worlds for the contextualisation of early Christianity. The Science of Religion served therefore in this respect as an adjunct to the study of the Bible and early Christianity.⁹⁷ Prior to 1950, nearly all Dutch scholars of religions were Egyptologists (W.B. Kristensen, G. van der Leeuw, A. de Buck, C.J. Bleeker, Th.P. van Baaren, and J. Zandee), Assyriologists (P.C. Tiele), or Semiticists/Egyptologists (H.Th. Obbink, H.W. Obbink). The exceptions were P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye who specialised in ancient Teutonic and Nordic religions; H. Hackmann, who was the first to have personal experience of, and to study, the Far-Eastern religions; H. Visscher who wrote on preliterate religions; and H. Kraemer, whose field of study was Javanese Islam. The study of Islam, Indian and other Eastern religions, and those of the preliterate religions was mainly developed in these faculties after 1960.

So what Tiele actually achieved was a significant contribution to the establishment of the *duplex ordo* as the *simplex ordo* of Dutch liberal academic theology as it had emerged since the late 1840s in Leiden, in particular.⁹⁸ Liberated by the law of 1876 from the need to conform to the faith of the NHK church and its just then emerging modalities, and from the supervision of its synod, academic theology was now free, in as far as it wished to be free,⁹⁹ to pursue the study of religion(s) in accordance with the dual norms of critical, independent scholarship and its own “modern[ist],” inclusive theology of religions.¹⁰⁰ That theology had relinquished Christianity’s traditional claim to the *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* salvific exclusivity. It also had exchanged confessional Dogmatic Theology for varieties of Natural Theology (*doctrina de deo*) and Philosophy of Religion¹⁰¹ as the central subjects of *duplex ordo* theology; and it had rejected the absolute authority of the Bible as well as the so called ‘supranaturalism’ of confessional theology. It had, however, replaced them with its own set of metaphysical postulates. One was that the meta-empirical did really exist and intervene in human affairs. Another that man was by nature religious. A third that there was an economy of salvation for all humans through all religions.¹⁰² And a fourth that Christianity,

and especially its modern, local varieties, in the ministration of which the students of a faculty of theology were to be trained, was, if not the “fulfilment of religion as such,”¹⁰³ then at least the “deep-rooted religion” of Dutch society.¹⁰⁴

A number of practical consequences were deduced from these postulations. A faculty of theology ought to have, and actually has had, Christianity, and more specifically Dutch, mainline Protestant Christianity, as its substantive object of research and teaching.¹⁰⁵ Its students had to be taught that “the Gospel has been a force for life throughout history.” They had to be presented with arguments against those who declare religion an illusion.¹⁰⁶ The *sui generis* doctrines of orthodox Christianity on the uniqueness of Jesus the Christ, the Bible, and the Christian church, were exchanged for another set of axiomatic claims about God, the religious nature of man, religious experience, and the fundamental equality of the religions of humankind. Content-wise, these views were wider, but in terms of testability they were as impervious to falsification, and therefore as *sui generis*, as were the orthodox Christian beliefs.

Van der Leeuw's Reconfessionalisation

Nearly all the other scholars who were appointed to chairs of History of Religions in the four *duplex ordo* Faculties of Theology in the Netherlands until the 1960s, created their own ‘close harmonies’ with the Christian academic theology of their own faculty of that time. They often did likewise, implicitly or explicitly, with that of a specific, liberal or middle of the road, modality of the NHK church. The appointees who did so at Leiden were: W.B. Kristensen, from 1901 to 1937;¹⁰⁷ H. Kraemer appointed for ‘Living Religions,’ from 1937 to 1948; A. de Buck, Kristensen’s pupil, for ‘Ancient Religions,’ from 1939 to 1959;¹⁰⁸ and K.A.H. Hidding for ‘Living Religions,’ from 1948 to 1972; and B. Hartmann for ‘Ancient Religions,’ from 1960 to 1987.

At Groningen, Gerardus van der Leeuw (1890-1950) took an explicitly church-congruent position as early as 1918, as is evident from

his inaugural address.¹⁰⁹ It is not accidental that he cultivated this confessional approach in the Groningen Faculty. As only future ministers of the NHK church were being trained in it, its climate was much more mono-denominational¹¹⁰ than in the Leiden faculty, in which students of the Arminian Church were also being trained, and in Amsterdam, where those of the Lutheran and Mennonite Churches also studied. Moreover, in the spectrum of the modalities of the NHK church, the Groningen Faculty cultivated links with the slightly left-of-centre ‘ethical’ modality, to which Van der Leeuw belonged,¹¹¹ and the duly right-of-centre ‘confessional’ modality. The latter had been founded in 1864 to combat the liberal theology of the former and to restore the doctrinal discipline of the early (17th century) orthodox Calvinist ‘Christ confessing’ Reformed Public Church in the NHK church of the 19th and 20th centuries.¹¹²

Van der Leeuw explained in his address why he had no qualms about disregarding the legal separation between academic and confessional theology. He observed correctly that those of his fellow scholars of religions, who demanded that (confessional) Theology be replaced with Science of Religion, or that the two be strictly separated, had also founded Science of Religion on meta-empirical postulates, such as the existence of God and the “real” relationship of believers to him, and, therefore, on a proper theology.¹¹³ His other argument was the psychic unity of humankind in matters of religion. He argued that the disparate discipline of the History of Religions (in the plural), i.e., the historical-philological study of the religions of humankind in their singularities, could be unified into the History of Religion (in the singular) by the study of their “psychological unity,” for the human mind functioned in all of them in identical ways.¹¹⁴ He dismissed the *standpuntloos standpunt* (“the standpoint-less standpoint”) of “alleged objectivity” as both impossible and undesirable,¹¹⁵ and rejected all non-religious explanations of religion, because they failed to do justice to the *sui generis* nature of religion.¹¹⁶ He said that he followed Kristensen¹¹⁷ in relying on this (religious) “psychology” and the art of the empathy of the religious scholar¹¹⁸ for creating a unitary approach to human religions which aimed to discover “religion

as such" in them. It sought to understand "the [common] religious [element] in [its many] different phenomena" which was "at their heart" everywhere, and to penetrate to "the psychological ground,"¹¹⁹ which was "their essence."¹²⁰ Other than Kristensen (whose only stipulation was that a scholar of religion must be religious),¹²¹ Van der Leeuw, moreover, "consciously and with conviction [took] one specific religion [Christianity], not only as his field of research but also as his norm."¹²²

He proposed that Science of Religion be regarded as the modern version, and successor, of Natural Theology, or *doctrina de deo*. By doing so, he proposed to fuse it with *godsdiensgeschiedenis*, the History of Religion (in the singular),¹²³ or the Phenomenology of Religion,¹²⁴ and to assign to it the task of dealing in a non-confessional way with 'the phenomenon of religion as such,' including Christianity.¹²⁵ Science of Religion, in his view, therefore, was "the precinct of Christian theology"¹²⁶ and as such an organic part of a faculty of theology.¹²⁷ In his scheme of that faculty's disciplines,¹²⁸ Van der Leeuw included the History of Religions (in the plural) as an integral part in the History (or Science) of Religion (in the singular), defining the latter as their systematic study unified by the "psychology" of [religious] empathy. The 'History of Religion' in its turn was to serve as a substantive part of the Historical Theology, together with the Biblical Theology and the History of Christianity. This historical group of theological disciplines was again to serve as the broad, 'factual' basis of Systematic Theology. In reverse and descending order, all these disciplines had to take their norm not only from Systematic Theology, but also, in line with Gunning¹²⁹ and Chantepie, from "the living faith of the Christian congregation."¹³⁰

In Van der Leeuw's system of the disciplines of a faculty of theology, the Science of Religion was part and parcel of a Christian theology that was academic and liberal as well as confessional and practical, i.e., directed towards "the living faith of the [Christian] congregation."¹³¹ This theology provided it not only with its norm, and point of departure but also with its goal. Van der Leeuw developed this approach further throughout his tenure until his sudden

death in 1950.¹³² By that time, he had redefined the difference between *duplex* and *simplex ordo* theology as that between the reflective stance of a Christian theologian in the university lecture hall of the faculty of theology on a weekday, and that same theologian's fervent sermon from the pulpit as a minister of the church on a Sunday.¹³³ By assisting Christian theology to achieve a profound awareness of the distinctly different revelations which God had granted to religions, the Science of Religion was to be instrumental in guiding the Church to its "Living Lord, Jesus Christ," who alone was "able to vivify it by His love."¹³⁴ Van der Leeuw grew increasingly convinced that "all theology is anthropology, and all anthropology is theology, [because] the principle of all knowledge about God and nature is the God-man, Christ."¹³⁵ He stated that his Science of Religion was that of a "Christian humanist"¹³⁶ and a "Christian existentialist"¹³⁷ who was certain that he "had been found" by God incarnate in Christ, the suffering *Ecce Homo*.¹³⁸

His successor, Th.P. van Baaren, who held the Groningen chair from 1952 to 1980, also took a 'religionist' position in the first decade of his teaching there.¹³⁹ The same goes, and much more explicitly, for H.Th. Obbink, who occupied the chair of History of Religions in the very confessional Utrecht Faculty from 1913 to 1939.¹⁴⁰ As it did for his son and Van Baaren's teacher, H.W. Obbink, who held it from 1939 to 1968;¹⁴¹ and for D.J. Hoens, Professor of 'Living Religions' from 1961 to 1982; and J. Zandee, Professor of 'Ancient Religions' from 1968 to 1982. The successors to Chantepie's chair in the Amsterdam Faculty were again no exception to this rule.¹⁴² They were A.J.H. Brandt (1900-1909), H.Th. Obbink from 1910 to 1913, H. Hackmann from 1913 to 1934,¹⁴³ J. van den Bergh van Eysinga from 1934 to 1935,¹⁴⁴ and C.J. Bleeker from 1945 to 1969. I will only discuss briefly Bleeker's 'close harmony' in view of the influence of his views in some quarters abroad.

Bleeker's Transcendent Reality

Bleeker took "awareness of the divine as a transcendent reality" as essential for any and all religions.¹⁴⁵ That is also apparent from his

definition of religion as “man’s relation to a divine reality,”¹⁴⁶ which originated from “a higher necessity:” a hierophanic “encounter with God or the Holy,” and is expressed in sincere *godsdiest*, “service of God.”¹⁴⁷ He viewed religion as “an invincible, creative and self-regenerating force,” as “man’s inseparable companion,” which “rises spontaneously in the human heart,” and is “indispensable” and “inherent” in human life.¹⁴⁸ He explained the “disparate” variety of human religions as God having “fixed” some human groups in one, and other peoples in another “habit,” or “attitude,” of receptivity towards one of his several modes of revelation: in nature, history, or the human mind.¹⁴⁹ He held that Schleiermacher had laid the theoretical foundation for the Science of Religion by “according the same absolute validity to all religions;” and he rejected both the Christian orthodox assertion that Christianity alone is the one true religion, and the reductive explanations of religion on the grounds of psychological and social factors.¹⁵⁰ He also published a *theologia religionum*, the core of which is that “God has lightened the path to truth for all peoples in all ages [...] in a pluriform dispensation of the truth.” “The spiritual notions [of mankind] are complementary,” therefore, and “the indisputably religious content of the non-Christian religions forces us to take seriously the notion of a general revelation.”¹⁵¹ He accorded no unique value to the Christian religion, save for Christians. The gospel is, as one of God’s dispensations, of “exceptional significance [...] for Christians” and “totally binding” on Christians, because “God has revealed His love in Christ” to them. But God did “not reveal in him his purpose for the world” nor his “unfathomable wisdom and majestic omnipotence.” Bleeker considered the doctrines of Trinity, incarnation and the two natures of Christ to be laudable Christologies of the past but “untenable in modern times.”¹⁵² Religions must constantly be reformed and re-conceived.¹⁵³ Christianity being a “Christonomous” religion,¹⁵⁴ however, he concluded his review of Vestdijk’s *De Toekomst der religie*¹⁵⁵ with the set liturgical confession: “Christ is the same today, yesterday, and in all eternity” (Hebr. 13: 8).¹⁵⁶

The Religionist Paradigm

The ‘close harmonies’ of Kristensen, Van der Leeuw, H.Th. Obbink, Bleeker, and Hidding took the shape of phenomenologies of religion grounded in the same metaphysical postulates on which Tiele and Chantepie founded their philosophies of religion. They were that the meta-empirical is real; that man is religious by nature; and that religion is *sui-generis* and should, therefore, not be ‘explained away.’ The others, H.W. Obbink, de Buck, Hartmann, Hoens, and Zandee also worked within this religionist paradigm without themselves making any pronouncements upon it. This common core of their several “close harmonies,” served as the virtually axiomatic philosophical-theological framework for the Science of Religion in the Netherlands till far beyond 1948,¹⁵⁷ when Van der Leeuw’s disciple, Fokke Sierksma, began publicly to dispute it. Despite his stark anti-Christian ‘nihilism,’ even Sierksma was a believer, albeit in an “unchristian god,” whom he experienced as “an x, a god-in-my-back,” a silent god playing cruel games with him.¹⁵⁸ Until 1960, liberal Christian and, in Sierksma’s case, post-Christian theologies of several sorts were taken to be the “natural” setting of Science of Religion in the Faculties of Theology of the Dutch State Universities. They were presumed to create the conditions for an unbiased and fully objective study of the religions of mankind.¹⁵⁹ This choir, therefore, also sang in close harmony. But a few shrill voices of dissent were also heard.

Kraemer’s Dissent

Hendrik Kraemer (1888-1965) was the principal exception to this general model, as Gunning and Visscher had been before him. The three had in common that they rejected the *duplex ordo* and strove after the re-absorption of academic theology and Science of Religion into confessional theology.¹⁶⁰ Gunning and Visscher, however, had been foisted on their faculties whilst Kraemer had not. It is curious that Kraemer, the missionary linguist, islamologist and theologian of a militantly confessional kind,¹⁶¹ was selected in early 1937 as Kristensen’s successor by the Leiden Faculty at the behest of Kristensen

himself.¹⁶² The Faculty may have appointed him for two reasons. First, the Faculty may have felt that the inclusion of the study of the modern religions of Asia (Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism) in the curriculum of the Faculty was overdue in the light of the increasingly significant presence the NHK church in the Dutch colonies, partly through its recent missionary activities and partly as the result of its established position of old.¹⁶³ The religions of Asia, and Islam especially, were important cultural and political factors in the Dutch East Indies, now Indonesia. Secondly, the gradual weakening of the liberal modality of the NHK church in the interbellum¹⁶⁴ made it mandatory for the Leiden Faculty to improve its relation with that church. One way to do so was through the missionary institutions in which Kraemer played a pivotal role, as Deputy Director of the *Zendingsschool* at nearby Oegstgeest, in which its missionaries were trained, and as Chairman of its Mission Board.¹⁶⁵ It is probably for these reasons that the Leiden Faculty allowed Kraemer to spend most of his time on his work for the Christian missions world wide before and after World War II, and during the war on his efforts to reform the NHK church. All in all, he seems to have spent rather little time on teaching and his other duties as Professor of Science of Religion.¹⁶⁶ At his request, the Faculty appointed the Egyptologist de Buck to teach Ancient Religions (1939-1959).¹⁶⁷

Kraemer called his variety of Barth's dialectical theology "biblical realism."¹⁶⁸ It was an equally polemic one, for Kraemer regarded "God's revelation in the Bible" as radically opposed to all human religion.¹⁶⁹ But he dissented from Barth in one important respect. Kraemer held, as did Kuyper,¹⁷⁰ that human nature was "ineradicably stamped with a *sensus divinitatis* and [had] a *sensus religionis* implanted into it."¹⁷¹ But he agreed with Barth nonetheless that "the relationship between God and man [was] fundamentally defective and [could] only be restored by divine initiative."¹⁷² The Christian faith must, therefore, be radically theocentric, bibliocentric, and Christocentric. All (the other) religions of man were radically anthropocentric.¹⁷³ They were naturalist and totalitarian systems embracing nature, society, cosmos and the believers, in monistic, rela-

tivist and even fundamentally agnostic ways.¹⁷⁴ Because they were basically similar, they were tolerant of each other and syncretistic, each easily assimilating, and peacefully coexisting with, other religions. According to Kraemer, no such coexistence was possible between these and prophetic missionary Christianity, however, because, by their nature, the naturalist religions had to resist radically the theocratic claims of Biblical religion. The two were diametrically opposed.¹⁷⁵

Duplex ordo academic theology also resisted these claims. In Kraemer's view, however, "theology, history, psychology, anthropology must [all] be exploited to achieve one aim, and one aim only: to be a better instrument in conveying the conviction that God is speaking His decisive Word in Jesus Christ to individuals, nations, peoples, cultures and races without distinction."¹⁷⁶ He termed the *duplex ordo* a "crooked" and "schizophrenic construction," and the faculties of *duplex ordo* theology "positivist" conglomerations of literary and historical disciplines which were only "half-Christian" and "quasi-theological," i.e., theological in name, only.¹⁷⁷ He also demanded that Philosophy of Religion be expanded into one catering not only for the West but also for the East. The Science of Religion ought to be placed in the margins of a "proper" (confessional) Faculty of Theology. Its professors should not only be lecturers, researchers and mentors but also *militia Christi*, "soldiers of Christ;" and the Science of Religion should be "crowned" by a Theology of Religion.¹⁷⁸

Although Kraemer held that the *simplex ordo* ought to be restored, he had no intention of banning the Science of Religion from *simplex ordo* theology. His linguistic studies and missionary work had made it plain to him that no modern theology, whether confessional or 'academic,' whether for missionaries in the colonies or for ministers 'at home,' could do without the study of the other religions, historical and comparative.¹⁷⁹ It must, however, not claim a central position.¹⁸⁰ Kraemer also voiced strong reservations about the 'scientific method' in the study of religions. He claimed that analysis of them breaks up their living, indivisible unity and thereby greatly distorts their actual realities. He insisted that all religions must be studied "in

the illuminating light of the revelation in Christ." That revelation showed "all religious life, the lofty as well as the degraded, [...] as fundamentally] *misdirected*."¹⁸¹

Kraemer spent barely ten years at Leiden. On 1 January 1948, he exchanged his chair at Leiden for the directorship of the new study centre of the World Council of Churches in Bossey, near Geneva, Switzerland. With the exception of his inaugural address, he had produced no publication in Science of Religion in that decade.¹⁸²

Epilogue

It is a firm conclusion of this article that the *duplex ordo* may be seen in retrospect to have served as the *simplex ordo* of Dutch Protestant liberal theology between 1860 and 1960.¹⁸³ The 1876 law did not "convert the faculties of theology, as a matter of principle, into faculties of science of religion,"¹⁸⁴ as has been asserted by its opponents. The crucial factor was the emergence of liberal theology with its different appreciation of humankind's religions in the course of the 19th century. That may be convincingly shown from another century of the history of the Dutch Science of Religion, that in the Dutch *simplex ordo* institutes of (confessional) theology between 1880 and 1980. In 1880, Kuyper founded the first of the Dutch *simplex ordo* institutes of academic theology: the Faculty of Theology at the Free University at Amsterdam, in explicit opposition to the new *duplex ordo* liberal theology established by the 1876 law at the Faculties of Theology of the State Universities. In the course of the 20th century, however, liberal theology gradually came to pervade nearly all Dutch academic institutes of confessional theology. The introduction of the Science of Religion into them was one of the signposts signalling that shift. The Science of Religion in those institutes displayed, and displays, a range of traits broadly similar to those of the Science of Religion in *duplex ordo* theology in the period discussed. But that is matter for another article.

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¹ "Directing our gaze from Christianity at the world of the historical religions, we think that we see the Gospel manifest itself as the fulfilment of religion as such" (Van der Leeuw 1933: 614; 1948a: 629; 1963: 646). All translations from Dutch, German or French into English in this article are by the author unless a different translator is expressly mentioned.

² The academic study of religions has traditionally been termed 'Science of Religion' in the universities of Continental Europe. It goes by the name of *Religionswissenschaft* in Germany; *godsdienstwetenschap* in the Netherlands; *religionsvideneskab* in Denmark; *religioznawcze* in Poland; *religiovedeniya* in Russia; *science(s) des religions* in France; *scienza delle religioni* in Italy; *ciencias de las religiones* in Spain; etc. and by *godsdienstwetenskap* in Afrikaans in South Africa. I use the term 'Science of Religion' throughout this article because it is a historical study, though I would prefer to term it 'the Science of Religions.'

³ Pinard de la Boullaye (1922: 504) traced the earliest use of *Religionswissenschaft* to a periodical on the History of Religions, entitled *Museum für die Religionswissenschaft in ihrem ganzen Umfang*, three volumes of which were published by H.Ph.K. Henke in Magdeburg between 1804 and 1806. Other very early uses of *Religionswissenschaft* were by the Czech philosopher of religion and mathematician Bolzano (1834¹/1853²/1994³; 1837¹/1841²/1994³); cf. also Post (1869). Its synonym, *Die Wissenschaft der Religion*, was used by Stiefelhagen (1858) and Tölle (1865-1871, I: 4; II: V).

⁴ The earliest use of *science des religions* was by Leblanc in 1852 (Leblanc 1852, I: 17 sq.). He, however, gave it in a different meaning from the modern one, i.e., as the allegorical interpretation of the myths of the ancient religions. The first to use the term in its modern sense was Émile Burnouf in 1864 (Burnouf 1864, 1872), with whom F. Max Müller had studied in 1845-1846. Cf. Pinard de la Boullaye 1922: 277, 504; van den Bosch 1993: 108.

⁵ Max Müller was the first to use it in English and he did so for the first time in an essay on 'Semitic monotheism' in 1860 (*pace* van den Bosch 1993: 109) which was republished in Müller (337-374). He popularised the term in his introduction to the *Essays on the Science of Religion* (1867) and his *Introduction to the Science of Religion* (1873), defining it as 'the critical and comparative study of the religions of the world' (cf. Müller 1867: XI, XVIII, XIX, XX, XXI, XXII, XXVI, 183, 373; and Müller 1873).

⁶ The first chair of *Allgemeine Religionsgeschichte*, ‘the General History of Religions,’ was established in the Faculty of Theology at the University of Geneva, Switzerland, in 1873 (*pace* Kraemer 1959: 9). Its first incumbent was T. Droz who occupied it from 1873 to 1880. Chairs were also established in the Universities of Lausanne, Basle, and Zürich in the following decades. The first two chairs in *godsdiensstgeschiedenis in het algemeen*, ‘General History of Religions,’ in the Netherlands were established in 1877 and 1878 at the universities of Leiden and Amsterdam after that subject had been added to list of courses to be taught in the Faculties of Theology at the (State) Universities of Leiden, Utrecht and Groningen in 1876. That list was also adopted by the Faculty of Theology of the (Municipal) University of Amsterdam. The first incumbent at Leiden University was C.P. Tiele, from 1877 to 1900. P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye was the first to occupy the Amsterdam chair, from 1878 to 1899, when he gave it up to become Professor of Ethics at the Leiden Faculty of Theology. The first chairs in France were those of A. Réville at the *Collège de France*, and of P. de Broglie at the *Institut Catholique*, both in Paris, in 1880. In Belgium, the chair of E.F.A. Comte Goblet d’Alviella at the *Université Libre* in Brussels was founded in 1884. In Italy, those of B. Labanca at the University of Rome, and of R. Pettazoni at the University of Bologna were established in respectively 1886 and in 1914. Sweden’s earliest chairs were those of N. Söderblom at the University of Uppsala in 1901, and of E. Lehmann at the University of Lund in 1913. That of T.W. Rhys Davids was the first in England, at the University of Manchester in 1904. In Germany, they were those of E. Lehmann at the University of Berlin in 1910, N. Söderblom at Leipzig University in 1912, C. Clemen at the University of Bonn in 1920, and F. Heiler at the University of Marburg in 1922. The first chair in Science of Religion in Denmark was established at the University of Copenhagen in 1914; and in Norway at the University of Oslo in 1915. Cf. Pinard de la Boullaye 1922: 331-333; Van der Leeuw 1948a: 679; Waardenburg 1972: 381, 461, 639; Sharpe 1975: 120-133; Rollmann 1991: 87-91. Cf. also Bianchi 1975: 28, note 21: ‘The first permanent chair of the History of Religions in Italy was held at the University of Rome, 1923-1953, by R. Pettazoni.’

⁷ Chantepie 1909a: 91. Another founder was, of course, F.M. Müller, as Tiele (1871a: 102) himself testified.

⁸ Leertouwer 1989: 154, 156, 158.

⁹ Tiele 1860: 816. Cf. also: ‘I can hardly imagine a scientific theology of which the history of religions is not an important part’ (Tiele 1860: 816, note 1); and: ‘Theology and Science of Religion must not be practised separately and independently. The former will have become truly scientific only when it has enlarged its boundaries and has merged completely with the latter’ (Tiele 1873a: 39).

¹⁰ Natural Theology, or *doctrina de deo*, had emerged as a distinct discipline during the ‘Batavian’ revolution (1795-1801), when it was split off from confessional Dogmatic Theology because it was believed to transcend the dogmatic theologies of

particular Christian churches (cf. De Jong 1969: 14, 16, 17, 18, 20). It was the "predecessor of both Philosophy of Religion and History of Religions, incorporating much material from Dogmatic Theology" (De Jong 1969: 21; 1968: 314). It was removed from the list of disciplines to be taught and examined in the *duplex ordo* faculties of theology in 1927.

¹¹ Tiele 1860. Cf., e.g., Roessingh 1924a, 1924d and Van der Linde 1983 on the growing popularity of modern theology.

¹² Cf. De Jong 1968: 316 sq.

¹³ Tiele 1866, 1867: 39.

¹⁴ Which became the stronghold of 'modern' (i.e., liberal) theology in the Netherlands in the following decades.

¹⁵ Tiele 1873a.

¹⁶ After three earlier drafts had stranded (De Jong 1968: 316-324). The universities at Leiden, Utrecht and Groningen were given five faculties: Theology, Law, Medicine, Mathematics & Physics, and Arts & Philosophy (art. 41).

¹⁷ The Faculties of Theology had usually only four, or exceptionally five, professors and some ten subjects to teach (cf. below note 113). The professors of a faculty, therefore, used to confer amongst themselves on who would teach which courses, each taking two or, if need be, three or more (Kristensen 1939/1954: 31). Tiele, however, taught History of Religions only. The reason for this was probably his (Arminian) outsiderhood (cf. below). Except for the new subject, History of Religions, all the other fields of study were, as a matter of course, entrusted to the 'normal' staff. They were those who had been raised in the traditions of these faculties which they viewed as the reserves of the Public Church and its newly emerging modalities (Van Rooden 1996: 159-168, 173, 174). Tiele asserted his right to teach Philosophy of Religion, and revived the defunct part of his formal commission as professor of the Leiden Faculty, only in 1891, when he, by then the senior member of the faculty, clashed with J.H. Gunning over the *duplex ordo*. (See below the section on 'The *Duplex Ordo* as *Simplex Ordo*.'

¹⁸ De Jong 1968: 329.

¹⁹ Tiele 1866: 213, 216, 226, 243; 1867: 41, 42, 52.

²⁰ Tiele 1866: 212. He hastened to add that he was not referring to the theology taught in the seminaries of the small Arminian, Lutheran and Baptist churches in the Netherlands, in which, "however humble their name," the theology taught, he asserted, was of an academic calibre.

²¹ Tiele 1866: 213, 216; 1867: 42.

²² Tiele 1866: 217-218.

²³ Tiele 1860: 815.

²⁴ Tiele 1866: 212-215.

²⁵ Tiele 1866: 216, 224-227.

²⁶ Tiele (1866: 239-240) distinguished four stages in that evolution. They evolved from nature religions through mythological religions and dogmatic-philosophical religions to world religions. He saw "symbolic thinking" as the transition between mythology and doctrine (Tiele 1870a: 9-11). Cf. also Tiele 1871a on the phase of the nature religions, and in particular on the problem of whether or not fetishism is a mark of man's earliest religion.

²⁷ Both these terms must be taken in a wider, more metaphorical sense than they would normally be taken nowadays.

²⁸ Tiele 1866: 241-242; 1867: 44-48, 51. In Tiele's Christianity, however, there was no room for the divinity of the Christ, but only for the historical Jesus of Nazareth who had taught men to adore God in spirit and truth (Tiele 1870b: 165, 167). That teaching of Jesus Christ must be propagated as the "religion of the coming age" (Tiele 1870b: 168). Tiele was not alone in rejecting the divinity of the Christ: J.H. Scholten and a few other 'modern' theologians had also taken this 'anti-supranaturalist' position in the 1860s (cf., e.g., Roessingh 1924d, IV: 311-317).

²⁹ Tiele 1866: 225-227.

³⁰ Tiele 1866: 227; or "religion itself" (Tiele 1866: 227, 240), or its "essence" (Tiele 1866: 233, 240-241).

³¹ Tiele 1866: 227, 229.

³² Tiele 1870a: 18-25.

³³ Tiele was referring here to J.H. Scholten's appeal in the 1840s, and to that of C.W. Opzoomer in the 1860s, to religious feeling for proving that Christianity had a unique position among the religions of humankind (cf. Roessingh 1924d, IV: 279-283, 286, 298-300).

³⁴ In line with the position taken by Scholten in his book on free will (1859; cf. Roessingh 1924d, IV: 291-296).

³⁵ Tiele 1870a: 20-21.

³⁶ The concept of "God," said Tiele (1870a: 21) originated as reason's "highest abstraction" after that human faculty had evolved from its earliest phase of "instinctive imagination" and had begun to "reduce religion to concepts."

³⁷ Tiele 1870a: 22, 20-25; 1870b: 167.

³⁸ Tiele 1867: 51.

³⁹ Tiele (1867: 51) himself translated the Dutch *grondkracht* ('basic force') in German as *Urkraft*, 'primeval force.'

⁴⁰ Tiele 1866: 234; also 1867: 43-44.

⁴¹ Tiele's 'psychological method' was actually a version of the then prevailing school of nature mythology. He asserted the psychological method explained religion from man himself. It did so by studying religions, and more specifically myths, as symbol systems. Man had borrowed these from his natural environment for expressing his belief that a spiritual principle governs the universe in the same manner

as the human mind consciously rules the human body and its natural environment (Tiele 1870a: 5). In 1870, i.e., before the publication of Tylor's *Primitive Culture* in 1871, Tiele combined elements of Müller's approach with some of Tylor's without apparently being aware of the contradiction between Müller's degressive and Tylor's progressive theories of cultural evolution. Thus Tiele spoke of his revulsion at the "chaotic" myths and "confused" beliefs of the savages (Tiele 1870a: 2) and regarded their fetishism a "disease from which religion could not have originated" (Tiele 1870a: 16). But he praised "natural man's relatively very pure" representation of "the above." He attributed his confused poly-, heno- and monotheistic beliefs to his childlike intelligence which was, as yet, unable to see the contradiction between belief in one god and belief in many gods (Tiele 1870a: 16; also 1870b: 162). In 1871, however, Tiele shifted towards a consistent Tylorian position, from which he severely criticised Müller's postulate of primitive revelation and his Schleiermachian theology of man perceiving the infinite in the finite. He also rejected Müller's theory of the disease of language as the route along which the pure, primeval religion had degenerated into polytheism; his too close identification of the study of languages with the study of religions; and his extrapolation of insights, which were perhaps true for the Arian religions, to religions of humankind (Tiele 1871a: 101-115). In same article, Tiele rejected the concept of fetishism as the earliest phase of human religious history and replaced it with that of the degenerate leftovers from earlier periods, a phenomenon which he said was found in all religions (Tiele 1871a: 98-101, 115-128). By 1873, Tiele had "swallowed Tylor's animism lock, stock and barrel" (Leertouwer 1989: 160). The religions of the savages were no longer the most degenerate, but rather the least developed form of a primeval religion that had been even more rude than theirs. From that "primitive religion," all religions had descended by natural growth or reform (Tiele 1873: 12). However, in his article on "Religion" in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1884), Tiele seems to have shifted again, this time towards a theory of primitive monotheism. He declared that primitive religions were "only the degraded remnants of [the more perfect religion that] they must once have been" (Chantepie de la Saussaye 1909a: 117).

⁴² Tiele conceded that he took the terms "nature" and "natural" here "not in the ordinary [meaning], but in [their] widest sense" (Tiele 1866: 228, 230).

⁴³ Tiele divided the Science of Religion into two parts: "the historical [part], or the philosophy of the history of religions," which researches the morphology of religions, and "the psychological [part] or the philosophy of religious man," which investigates the essence of religion (Tiele 1866: 236; cf. also Tiele 1860: 828-829).

⁴⁴ Tiele 1866: 224-226.

⁴⁵ Tiele 1866: 236-243, esp. 243; 1867: 38-52, esp. 39-42, 48-52.

⁴⁶ Tiele 1867: 39-42.

⁴⁷ As they were until 1876 (Tiele 1867: 40; Oort 1892: 114). Tiele, however, excluded the History of the Religion of Israel as a matter of course from this allo-

cation of subjects to the Faculty of Arts & Philosophy, because he considered it an integral part of the general history of religions (Tiele 1866: 242-243; 1867: 42).

⁴⁸ De Jong 1969: 5, 7. Abraham Kuenen (1828-1891) was Scholten's special pupil and a leader of 'Modern Theology.' In 1853, at the age of 24, he was appointed to teach New Testament Exegesis and the Encyclopaedia of Theology at the Leiden Faculty, to which Ethics was added in 1860. But his particular field of study was Old Testament Exegesis in which he also offered classes and in which he became one of the leading scholar of his time (Oort 1892: 114; Kristensen 1939/1954: 31-32). He was formally appointed Professor of OT Exegesis and the History of the Religion of Israel in 1877 (cf. also Anonymus 1912: 734).

⁴⁹ Tiele 1866: 212-215, 242; 1867: 51-52.

⁵⁰ Tiele 1860: 830.

⁵¹ Tiele 1867: 52.

⁵² Said Tiele in 1879 (quoted in Roessingh 1924d, IV: 359-360). Tiele added that Christianity would be ready to play that role only after it had assimilated "the best of the other religions." For similar positions, cf. Groenman 1933: 208-216; Van den Bergh van Eysinga 1940: 114-115. For an incisive critique of the theological teleology of this Euro- and Christiano-centric evolutionism, see Kristensen 1915/1954: 75-79.

⁵³ As did Scholten in his dogmatic theology (Roessingh 1924d, IV: 294).

⁵⁴ Tiele 1870b: 167; cf. Groenman (1933: 213) who termed men "the organs of God;" and Van den Bergh van Eysinga 1940: 109.

⁵⁵ There are, of course, important differences between Tiele's unitarian theology and Van der Leeuw's Christocentric one as well as between their respective Sciences of Religion, as I will show in greater detail below. Even so, Wiebe (1991) is wrong to construct an absolute opposition between Tiele and Van der Leeuw, by arguing that Van der Leeuw subverted and destroyed Tiele's scientific study of religions. The Science of Religion of each of them sprang from a Christian theology. The semblance of scientific rigor evident in Tiele's work is due mainly to the methodological *naïveté* of his more positivistic age. Wiebe's polemic against Van der Leeuw however, is not without historical substance. Van der Leeuw 'reconfessionalised' Science of Religion by comparison with Tiele's, as will be shown below. But that difference is better explained by Tiele's being an 'outsider' and Van der Leeuw an 'insider,' in terms of their relationship to the (informal NHK) 'establishment,' than by the one 'establishing' and the other 'subverting' the Science of Religion. Furthermore, Van der Leeuw studied in Leiden from 1908 to 1913 and was in terms of his theology, much more a disciple of Chantepie, his Professor of Ethics and a member of the NHK church, than of Kristensen, his Professor of Science of Religion and a Norwegian Lutheran. Hak (1994: 122) was also incorrect in suggesting that Tiele had begun to separate Science of Religion from Theology; nor does his reference to Sierksma 1977 support this assertion.

⁵⁶ The body of the thesis counts only 87 small pages and is supplemented by 19 pages of annotations.

⁵⁷ Chantepie de la Saussaye 1871: 3, 46, 47-58, 81, 93, note 1.

⁵⁸ Tiele 1873b: 379.

⁵⁹ Chantepie 1878: 25.

⁶⁰ Chantepie (1871: 10) referred to them as */ver]onderstellingen*, 'hypotheses.' They were, however, clearly not meant as provisional assumptions to be rejected if falsified, but rather as the basic and axiomatic conditions without which no 'objective' Science of Religion is possible.

⁶¹ Chantepie 1871: 10, 55. He argued, that "if that relationship [between God and man, JP] does not actually exist, religion would indeed have to be termed a disease of the human mind; and, because no reality corresponded to it, it could hardly claim to be an object of scientific research" (Chantepie 1871: 10, 17-18).

⁶² "Though it cannot possibly be denied that the existence of God and his relationship to the world cannot be proved scientifically, the postulate of his existence remains nonetheless the very corner stone of the science of religion. [...] It [simply] cannot count God out." (Chantepie 1871: 47-48).

⁶³ Chantepie 1871: 47, 48, 81, 83.

⁶⁴ Chantepie 1871: 9-10, 11, 32, 41, 47-48, 54-55.

⁶⁵ Chantepie 1871: 51-52, 101, note 47.

⁶⁶ Chantepie 1871: 11, 33-35. Chantepie (1871: 98-99) referred to F.M. Müller's early publications on language to corroborate his argument.

⁶⁷ Chantepie 1871: 12-15. He used the term "hypothesis" here and on p. 38 in a very different meaning from that on pp. 10, 17-18, where it referred to the axiomatic metaphysical foundation of the Science of Religion.

⁶⁸ Chantepie 1871: 10-14, 87.

⁶⁹ Chantepie 1871: 26, 37, 49-51, 59-76. Chantepie held that humans did not evolve from an animal state, for they had been endowed with language, culture and a "healthy intellect" from the earliest moment of their existence (Chantepie 1871: 33-34, 98-99).

⁷⁰ Chantepie 1871: 49; 1878: 28.

⁷¹ Chantepie 1871: 49, 51-54; cf. also 97, where he approvingly quoted M. Carrière to the effect that phenomena of nature caused man to become aware of superior powers. Not only did they feel dependent upon them but, at the same time, they felt borne by them and surrounded by their love (*liebevoll umfangen*). This is an early expression of the mysticism, at once deistic and Christo-centric, which was at the heart of the romantic spirituality which Chantepie cultivated throughout his life. As with other theologians of the Groningen School, this emotional Christo-centrism did not necessarily imply that Chantepie held that Christ was divine, although he regarded him God's supreme revelation to humankind.

⁷² Chanepie 1871: 54 sq.

⁷³ Curiously, in his valedictory address, Chanepie seems to join Müller's "perception of the Infinite" with Tylor's animism as a reductionist explanation of the origin of religion (Chanepie 1916: 9).

⁷⁴ Chanepie 1871: 51-53, 76, 101.

⁷⁵ Chanepie 1871: 81, 86; see also Roessingh 1924c: 466, 468-471.

⁷⁶ Chanepie 1871: 33-34, 54-58, 83, 98.

⁷⁷ Tiele 1871b: 374-380.

⁷⁸ See Roessingh 1919: 66, 69-72, esp. 71: "Our faculties [of theology] are not faculties of Science of Religion and must not pretend that they are. [...] Actually, the [programme of] studies has remained completely oriented towards Christianity."

⁷⁹ To which several other disciplines were added in the course of this century: Christian Ethics, Biblical Theology, the History of the Dutch Reformed Church, its 'Canon Law,' the History of Christian Mission, Liturgics, Homiletics, Catechetics, Ecumenics, etc. (cf. De Jong 1968: 239-332.)

⁸⁰ Their salaries, however, were paid by the State (article 104 of the law of 28 April 1876). They were entitled to take part in the various ceremonies at their universities (art. 105). Candidates for the ministry were admitted to the university, as full students, at half the normal fees (art. 106).

⁸¹ They were actually appointed by the Minister of Internal Affairs. As a result, political considerations did sometimes play a major part in appointments such as those of Gunning (see below and notes 114, 121) and Visscher (see below and note 123).

⁸² They were the Encyclopaedia of Theology, the History of the Doctrine about God, the General History of Religions, the History of the Religion of Israel, the History of Christianity, the Literature of Israel and Early Christianity, the Exegesis of the Old and New Testaments, the History of the Doctrines of the Christian Religion, the Philosophy of Religion, and Ethics (art. 42). On the history of the genesis of this law and, in particular, its reconstruction of the faculties of theology, cf. Berkhof 1954: 24-29; Kraemer 1959: 10-19; De Jong 1968; Bakhuizen van den Brink 1954.

⁸³ Pace Van Leeuwen 1959: 115.

⁸⁴ In 1877, Tiele was appointed Professor of History of Religions and Philosophy of Religion, on maximum salary and some extras (De Jong 1982: 6).

⁸⁵ See above note 10.

⁸⁶ It is of interest to note that Hume's *The Natural History of Religion* (1857) is the fountainhead not only of the term and the discipline of History of Religion(s), but also, at least in England, of Philosophy of Religion (Root 1956: 7).

⁸⁷ Apart from his inaugural address (van Dijk 1883), van Dijk never produced a publication on the History of Religions (van Haarlem 1983: 183). He held that true knowledge of other religions was possible only for those who possessed the "faculty

of divination" for understanding the religious language of dependency upon the living God who had revealed himself to them, common to all men. That dependency was the essence of all religion, for religion was not merely a mood, but also both an ontological relationship between God and humans, and their awareness that they were bound to, and dependent on, God. Van Dijk also held that God was a proper object of [the] science [of Theology] because he had revealed himself in the finite realm of man (Van Dijk 1883/1927, I: 398-402, 409-410, 413).

⁸⁸ Lamers 1900; Visscher 1911.

⁸⁹ H.Th. Obbink taught History of Religions, Natural Theology (*doctrina deo*), and Assyriology at Utrecht University from 1913 till 1939. In 1918, G. van der Leeuw became Professor of History of Religions, the History of *doctrina deo* (van der Leeuw 1918: 3), and Egyptology at the University of Groningen where he also taught the Encyclopaedia of Theology. In 1941, the NHK church commissioned him also to teach the (confessional) subject of Liturgics (cf. van der Leeuw 1948²/1935¹; Sierksma 1951: 31, 107-108; Waardenburg 1983: 114-115). P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye had no teaching duties other than History of Religions at the University of Amsterdam between 1878 and 1899, nor had Tielemans' successor, W.B. Kristensen, at Leiden from 1902 to 1937. Chantepie, however, gave up his chair of History of Religions in Amsterdam in 1899 in order to succeed Gunning as Professor of the Encyclopaedia of Theology, Philosophy of Religion, and Ethics at Leiden University (De Jong 1982: 16). In his Leiden inaugural address, he stated that he was not really happy with the *duplex ordo* structure of the faculties of theology (Chantepie 1899: 16), but he did not demand, as Gunning had done, that theology be tied to the faith of the church, though his personal faith was a Christocentric one (Roessingh 1924a, [II]: 400; 1924c: 469; cf. also Hak 1964: 14-15).

⁹⁰ The fact that, except for Tielemans, historians of religions were never assigned to teach the Philosophy of Religion signals the beginning of the separation between Philosophy of Religion, which was the central subject of Christianocentric *duplex ordo* liberal theology, and Science of Religion, which remained marginal in terms of its subject matter and perceived relevance for 'ministerial formation.' The distance gradually increased by the following steps. Chantepie introduced 'Phenomenology of Religion' for classifying the data of History of Religions in an orderly way (Chantepie 1887: 8, 67-73; Waardenburg 1973: 105-113). Kristensen (1960: 1-9) used Phenomenology of Religion in addition "to grasp the [absolute] value which [religious phenomena] have had for the believers themselves," and to discover "their ideal connections" and essences. Van der Leeuw equated (and exchanged) Phenomenology of Religion with Natural Theology in his own project of the reconfessionalisation of Science of Religion. See below and Van der Leeuw 1918: 5; see also above note 10 on the history of Natural Theology as a subject in Dutch faculties of theology; and James 1985: 325-334. The separation became a huge rift after 1960 when method-

ological agnosticism became the dominant paradigm of Dutch Science of Religion in *duplex ordo* faculties of theology (Van Baaren 1973: 44; Platvoet forthcoming).

⁹¹ See Tielemans 1892: 1.

⁹² J.H. Scholten (1811-1885), the former Professor of New Testament, *doctrina deo* (Natural Theology) and Dogmatic Theology (1845-1876), had also been appointed Professor of Philosophy of Religion and *doctrina deo* in 1876. When Scholten retired in 1881, L. Rauwenhoff, who had been Professor of History of Christianity and Christian Doctrine till then, was appointed Professor of Philosophy of Religion; in addition he was assigned the Encyclopaedia of Theology (Roessingh 1924a, (II): 396; Wiegeraad 1991: 23). After Rauwenhoff's early death in 1889, J.H. Gunning was appointed Professor of Philosophy of Religion; with Ethics being added on Kuenen's death in 1891.

⁹³ These parties were the first major signs of the re-organisation of Dutch society into a mode of *apartheid*, the 'pillars.' Between roughly 1880 and 1960, they divided the Dutch nation into a number of sections each cultivating its distinct religious or ideological identity by each establishing its own political party, schools, universities, health care, media, sporting and other associations, etc.; cf. Van Rooden 1996: 32-42, 162-199.

⁹⁴ De Jong 1982: 12-13.

⁹⁵ Cf. Gunning 1890, 1892.

⁹⁶ See Tielemans 1892: 1-5; Roessingh 1924a, (II): 398-400; Kraemer 1959: 22-26; De Lange 1987.

⁹⁷ Cf., e.g., Roessingh (1919: 71) on History of Religions as the "obliging maid-servant assisting us to understand better the piety and ideas of the Old and New Testaments."

⁹⁸ Cf. Roessingh 1924d (IV): 278, *passim*.

⁹⁹ Only a few, such as Tielemans in Leiden and Van den Bergh van Eysingha in Amsterdam, actually strove for full independence from the NHK church. The largest faculty, the Utrecht one, in particular became closely allied to the emerging orthodox wing of that church. The modalities of the NHK church, and the minor Protestant churches which maintained their seminaries at one of the faculties, each cultivated strong links with a particular faculty. Through the informal processes of co-optation, they influenced *de facto* who was appointed to what chair, as Tak van Poortvliet, Minister of Internal Affairs, was forced to admit in Parliament in 1896 when pressed on this point by Abraham Kuyper (De Jong 1982: 15). When Kuyper himself was both Prime Minister and Minister of Internal Affairs from 1901 to 1906, he pursued a vigorous policy of 'reconfessionalisation,' e.g., by appointing Hugo Visscher as Professor of History of Religions, Natural Theology and Ethics at the Utrecht Faculty against its wishes. Visscher's many dissenting "recommendations" to Kuyper and his successors enabled them to steer that faculty even more solidly towards the right wing of the NHK church. A similar policy of 'reconfessionalisation' was pursued

by the various Dutch government coalitions of the ‘confessional’ parties between 1918 and 1933 (De Jong 1982: 29-32; cf. also Wiegeraad 1991: 45-67). On the pragmatic and political relationships between the NHK church and the *duplex ordo* faculties, cf. also Roessingh 1924b, (II): 416; 1924d: 288.

¹⁰⁰ Cf., e.g., Roessingh 1924a: 394-395; Van den Bergh van Eysinga 1940: 102-103; and especially Sierksma (1950: 197) who squarely located the ‘a-theoretical’ (i.e., normative) interest of this Science of Religion in the theological problem posed by the plurality of religions.

¹⁰¹ Van Heemskerk, however, was enough of a realist to acknowledge that it was unlikely that (church-tied) Dogmatic Theology would not palpably influence the teaching of these subjects by these *duplex ordo* professors of theology (De Jong 1968: 327).

¹⁰² Cf., e.g., Kuenen 1874: 625, 634, 639-641; Van Dijk 1883/1926, I: 399-400; Groenman 1933: 206-208.

¹⁰³ Cf. above note 1. Except for Tielemans (cf. above note 64), van der Leeuw (cf. note 1), Bleeker (with qualifications, see below), and of course Kuyper and Kraemer (see below), this theology of Christianity’s superiority over other religions was more often a hidden assumption than an explicit theory in the publications of Dutch scholars of religions of this period. If they voiced these views at all, it was mostly *viva voce* in the lecture hall (Sierksma 1951: 41-42). Kristensen (1960: 11-15, 17) strongly resisted Tielemans’ grading of religions, on the basis of his (Kristensen’s) (mistaken) argument that every religion was “of absolute value” to its believers (Kristensen 1960: 6). Kraemer (1960: xxiv) was greatly troubled by this “blurring of the majestic problem of Truth” by his teacher and predecessor Kristensen.

¹⁰⁴ Roessingh 1919: 70-72.

¹⁰⁵ That was the case not only in Roessingh’s time (Roessingh 1919: 71) but is *grosso modo* true even now.

¹⁰⁶ Cf., e.g., Roessingh 1919: 74-75; 1924b: 416-418.

¹⁰⁷ See Kristensen (1960: 9-10; 1931/1954: 11; Kraemer 1960: xiii, xviii-xix, xxi-xxii, xxiii-xiv) on the need for the scholar of religions to have “personal religious experience.” On Kristensen’s Christian spirituality, cf. Van Leeuwen 1959: 116-117; Kraemer 1960: xi, xiii, xxii-xxiv. Kristensen’s methodology was not free of contradiction. He held, on the one hand, that the only legitimate object of Science of Religion was religion as the believers themselves saw it (Kristensen 1946/1954: 15). Its task, therefore, was to understand religions from the perspective of their believers (Kristensen 1960: 13); and the scholar of religions must himself or herself be religious and “grow religiously” by that study (Kristensen 1919: 264; 1960: 10). He also insisted, however, that scholars, as modern man, “cannot penetrate to the real meaning” which Ancient believers attached to their acts and myths. They cannot “understand them in the same manner as the Ancients understood them,” for modern man can only attach symbolical meanings to what was perfectly real for

the Ancients (Kristensen 1931/1954: 10-11). Modern scholars, therefore, “remain strangers in the precincts of the temple” forever. They achieve an understanding of the irrational magical religiosity of the Ancients that is doomed to be qualitatively different and only approximate. Because “their reality is no longer ours” and because “we cannot look with their eyes,” “[the Ancients] saw what we do not see, and we see what they did not see” (Kristensen 1931/1954: 9, 10, 12, 13, 14).

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Hidding 1960.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Kraemer 1959: 27.

¹¹⁰ That at the Utrecht faculty, at which also, until the late 1960s, only students of the NHK church were trained, was even more outspokenly ‘confessional’ than the Groningen faculty because of its preponderant link to the powerful right wing *Gereformeerde Bond* modality, founded in 1909.

¹¹¹ Cf., e.g., Waardenburg 1983: 116; Waardenburg (1978: 189, 197, 242-243) characterizes Van der Leeuw’s ‘ethical’ position as a “balance between confessional orthodoxy and liberal modernism.”

¹¹² Cf. Golterman 1971.

¹¹³ Van der Leeuw 1918: 17-18. He might have referred for support to Kuenen who in 1874 had combatted the ‘naturalist’ conclusion of the ‘positivists’ among the Dutch modern theologians that the rejection of the ‘supranaturalism’ [of confessional theology] by modern theology logically implied “religion without metaphysics” and the reduction of religion to a merely pragmatic attitude to life (Kuenen 1874: 624, 635, *passim*). Kuenen accused his opponents of “orthodoxophobia” (Kuenen 1874: 645).

¹¹⁴ Van der Leeuw 1918: 5, 6, 7.

¹¹⁵ Van der Leeuw 1918: 15; Van der Leeuw expressed himself in even stronger terms when he termed the alleged unbiased treatment of data by the “cold observer” “from afar” as “positively fatal” (“geradezu verhängnisvoll”) (Van der Leeuw 1933: 613, 647, 648; 1948: 628, 666; 1963: 645, 678, 679). Van der Leeuw touched here on a raw nerve in Kristensen, who accused him of over-simplifying the methodology of the historical study of religions by collapsing their historical diversity into their “common psychological ground” of “religion as such” or “natural religion.” That abstraction, said Kristensen (1919: 262), “does not exist.” Only the historical religions exist. Moreover, Phenomenology of Religion is not competent to establish the nature of religion. That is the task of Philosophical Theology/Philosophy of Religion, and even that discipline could “not solve that problem” (Kristensen 1919: 263; cf. 1960: 9). Kristensen (1919: 263) took the position that the historical research of religions should not be governed by definitions of religion that purported to establish its essence. Against Van der Leeuw’s dismissal of the “alleged objectivity” of historical research and his shift to his own Christian subjectivity, Kristensen argued that the study of religions should be guided by the sincere interaction between the religiosity of the believers studied and of the scholar studying them. That study provided the

scholar with a constantly expanding religious horizon that not only caused the researcher to “grow religiously” but also slowly changed his religious preconceptions (Kristensen 1919: 263-265; cf. also Waardenburg 1978: 244; 1983: 115). Historical research, he insisted elsewhere, is led astray by normative evaluation. Instead, the “dangerous discipline” of the History of Religions demands that one abandon “the notion of one’s own centrality.” The safety of one’s axiomatic certainties must be abandoned. One must surrender oneself to the object of one’s study and understand it from the sympathy which it has generated in one, at the price of paralyzing uncertainty in matters of religious truth (Kristensen 1915/1954: 68-69, 70-73, 74-75, 80-81). Once a scholar has de-established his own centre, has reduced it to only one among many, and views each religion as the very imperfect expression of the divine reality as believers have experienced it, each and every religion will lead the scholar deeper into its mystery (Kristensen 1915/1954: 82-83).

¹¹⁶ Van der Leeuw 1918: 7-9.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Kristensen 1960: 7, 139-140.

¹¹⁸ Who is in need of intuition as much as he is in need of knowledge (Van der Leeuw 1918: 9-10).

¹¹⁹ Van der Leeuw 1918: 7, quoting Kristensen 1904: 237.

¹²⁰ Van der Leeuw 1918: 21.

¹²¹ Cf., e.g., Kristensen 1960: 9-10; cf. also Van der Leeuw (1918: 14): “the study of religions requires a religious researcher.”

¹²² Van der Leeuw 1918: 15, 18-20; also 1933: 613-614; 1948a: 629; 1963: 645-646. Van der Leeuw explicitly affirmed that that religion was that of the NHK church. He did so in the concluding part of his inaugural lecture, when he addressed the two professors appointed by that church to teach confessional theology as well as the students preparing for the ministry in that church at the Groningen faculty (Van der Leeuw 1918: 23-24, 27). He did so again in note 23.

¹²³ He proposed that the title of his chair be changed from *geschiedenis der godsdiensten in het algemeen* (the General History of Religions, in the plural) to *algemene godsdienstgeschiedenis* (the General History of Religion, in the singular). He considered that “reduction” only as “a minor breach” of the law of 1876, although he acknowledged that it introduced “a fundamental distinction” (Van der Leeuw 1918: 5).

¹²⁴ On the genesis, history and multiple meanings of ‘phenomenology’ and its distinct uses in ‘Phenomenology of Religion’ as championed by Chantepie, Van der Leeuw and Bleeker, cf. James 1985.

¹²⁵ Van der Leeuw 1918: 6, 7, 19.

¹²⁶ Van der Leeuw 1918: 22.

¹²⁷ Van der Leeuw 1918: 5-7, 14-15.

¹²⁸ Van der Leeuw was also assigned to teach the Encyclopaedia of Theology (and Egyptian Language and Literature in the Faculty of Arts) (cf., e.g., Waardenburg 1978: 189-190).

¹²⁹ Van der Leeuw explicitly acknowledged his debt to Gunning's *Godeleerdheid en Godsdienstwetenschap* ('Theology and Science of Religion,' 1892), praising it as a "marvelous booklet" (Van der Leeuw 1918: 25, note 2).

¹³⁰ Van der Leeuw 1918: 15-16, 18-22.

¹³¹ Van der Leeuw 1918: 15-16, 18.

¹³² For surveys of Van der Leeuw's theological development, cf. Waardenburg 1978: 193-220; 1983: 116-118.

¹³³ Van der Leeuw 1948b: 197. The briefest summary of Van der Leeuw's 'close harmony' was his saying that there was 'no culture without cult' (quoted by Van Veen [1951: 531]); another brief one is: "all understanding is ultimately religious" (Van der Leeuw 1933: 647).

¹³⁴ Van der Leeuw 1918: 21-22.

¹³⁵ Van der Leeuw 1948b: 196; cf. also Van der Leeuw 1933: 613-614; 1948a: 628-630; Kraemer 1959: 26-33; Mulder 1965: 8-9.

¹³⁶ Van der Leeuw 1947a.

¹³⁷ Van der Leeuw 1947b: 571-572.

¹³⁸ Van der Leeuw & Sierksma 1949: 6-7, 10-12; cf. also Van der Leeuw 1933: 646-648; 1948a: 665-667; 1963: 678-679; Waardenburg 1973: 419-421; 1983: 119; James 1985: 328-329.

¹³⁹ On Van Baaren's early religionism and his shift to methodological agnosticism, cf. Platvoet forthcoming.

¹⁴⁰ When Obbink retired, his students testified that he had taught the Science of Religion to them in closest union with Biblical Studies and in a Christo-centric manner, in order that they might become good ministers in the church (Edelkoort e.a. 1939: VII-XI). For examples of Obbink's biblio- and Christo-centric approach, see Obbink 1903: 22-28; 1913: 105-107; cf. also Hak 1964: 16.

¹⁴¹ Cf. Hak (1964: 17-21) on H.W. Obbink's partly 'ethical,' partly Barthian theology.

¹⁴² I have not been able to establish who taught Science of Religion in the Amsterdam Faculty from 1935 to 1945.

¹⁴³ Hackmann read Theology and Semitic Languages at Leipzig and Göttingen Universities from 1883 to 1886, and obtained a Ph.D. in Old Testament Exegesis at Göttingen in 1893. He worked as a Lutheran minister in Shanghai from 1894 to 1903, and travelled extensively in the Far East from 1901 to 1903 and again from 1910 to 1912. While serving as the pastor of a German congregation in London, he published extensively on Chinese Buddhism. He was appointed Professor of History of Religions and the History of the Religion of Israel at Amsterdam University in 1913. His publications were virtually all on Chinese religions. Cf. Merkel 1934.

¹⁴⁴ This “last and probably most erudite representative of the radical Dutch school [in New Testament Studies]” (Van der Horst 1988: 38) was another leader of ‘Modern Theology.’ He was appointed Professor Extraordinary of History of Religions in the Amsterdam Faculty in 1934, and Ordinary Professor for New Testament and Early Christian Literature in 1935.

¹⁴⁵ Quoted in Siersma 1979: 139; cf. also Bleeker 1963: 37-38; 1966: 77, 120-121; 1973: 151-152, 197.

¹⁴⁶ Bleeker 1963: 45, 51; also 1966: 84; 1973: 11, 151, 156, 163.

¹⁴⁷ Bleeker 1956: 7; 1965: 24, 34; 1966: 95, 117, 120; 1971: 646; 1972: 41; 1973: 156, 167.

¹⁴⁸ Bleeker 1963: 24; 1966: 7, 60-62, 112, 117, 119-121.

¹⁴⁹ Bleeker 1956: 77-80; 1958b: 339; 1963: 32-34; 1966: 72-74, 76, 95, 101-102; 1973: 163.

¹⁵⁰ Bleeker 1956: 6-7, 13, 75, 85-88; 1958b: 335-336; 1963: 9, 19, 31; 1966: 58-59, 63, 70, 76-94; 1971: 645-646; 1973: 161.

¹⁵¹ Bleeker 1965: 122; 1966: 105-106; also 1959a: 171; 1966: 72-74, 81, 95-109, 128; 1972: 217.

¹⁵² Bleeker 1966: 107, 124-126.

¹⁵³ Bleeker 1958a: 169-170; 1966: 36, 54, 127-128.

¹⁵⁴ Bleeker 1966: 125.

¹⁵⁵ Bleeker 1949, also in Siersma 1979: 129-139.

¹⁵⁶ In Siersma 1979: 139; also Bleeker 1966: 121. Cf. also Mulder 1965: 8-9; James 1985: 313-318.

¹⁵⁷ E.g., Bakhuizen van den Brink (1955: 211-212) argued in 1955 that one might conceivably equate *duplex ordo* theology with ‘Faculties of Science of Religion,’ provided that the “completely Western-Christian nature” of *duplex ordo* theology is also acknowledged, as well as its intimate relationship with [Dutch] Science of Religion.

¹⁵⁸ Van der Leeuw & Siersma 1948: 15-16; see Platvoet forthcoming.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. also van den Bergh van Eysinga 1940: 112.

¹⁶⁰ Cf., e.g., Kraemer 1959: 14.

¹⁶¹ Kraemer (1888-1965) had been trained as a missionary at the *Nederlandse Zendingsschool* at Rotterdam from 1905 to 1911. He had read Languages and Literatures of Indonesia (mainly those of Java) at Leiden University, specialising in Islam under Snouck Hurgronje, from 1911 to 1921 (Van Leeuwen 1959: 10-16; Jansen Schoonhoven 1983: 104-105). He had sat in also on Kristensen’s Science of Religion lectures in those years. They had “gripped” him, because Kristensen “himself was gripped” (Kraemer 1960: xix). He had concluded his studies in Leiden in 1921 with a *cum laude* Ph.D. on a 16th century Javanese *primbon*, Muslim mystical treatise (Kraemer 1921). He had been employed, between 1923 and 1935,

as Bible translator by the *Nederlands Bijbelgenootschap* on Java. In addition, he had also been commissioned to study recent developments among intellectuals in Java and in Javanese Islam. He had travelled widely through Indonesia in his official function of visiting, and reporting on, many regional dependencies of the Protestant Church of the Dutch East Indies (Van Leeuwen 1959: 16-92; Jansen Schoonhoven 1983: 105-107). After his return to Europe in 1935, he had served as an officer of the International Missionary Council from 1936 to 1938, with the special task of preparing its third international conference at Tambaran, India, in December 1938 (Van Leeuwen 1959: 98-109).

¹⁶² Kraemer 1960: xi; Van Leeuwen 1959: 116-117.

¹⁶³ Cf., e.g., Van Leeuwen 1959: 21-92; on its established position: Van Leeuwen 1959: 84-87.

¹⁶⁴ Mainly through the growing influence of Dutch varieties of Barth's 'dialectical' theology, developed by O. Noordmans (1871-1956), H. Kraemer and H. Miskotte (1894-1976), confessional systematic theology lost virtually all interest in the other religions of humankind and in Science of Religion (Waardenburg 1978: 243, 246; 1983: 119).

¹⁶⁵ Van Veen 1947: 562.

¹⁶⁶ Van Leeuwen 1959: 117; 103-113. The Leiden Faculty agreed that Kraemer would assume teaching duties only after the conference at Tambaran in December 1938 (Van Leeuwen 1959: 117). Though heavily preoccupied with the preparation of that conference, Kraemer did manage to deliver his inaugural address on 3 December 1937. After Tambaran, Kraemer traveled for four months through Southern India, Ceylon, Sumatra, Java, Celebes and Bali (Kraemer 1940: 55-202; Van Leeuwen 1959: 109-113), returning to Leiden in the early summer of 1939. The University of Leiden was closed from 26 November 1941 until the end of the war. With many other leading intellectuals, Kraemer was detained as a hostage by the Germans at St. Michelsgestel from July 1942 until 1943 (Van Leeuwen 1959: 139-141, 151). In addition, from 1940 until his departure for Bossey in late 1947, Kraemer was deeply involved in NKH church renewal (Van Veen 1947; Van Leeuwen 1959: 114-157). Kraemer had an aversion to the routine of teaching (Van Leeuwen 1959: 114, 120). He suffered a serious collapse in late 1946 (Jansen Schoonhoven 1983: 108-109).

¹⁶⁷ Cf. van Leeuwen 1959: 120. De Buck was appointed Professor Extraordinary in Egyptology and the History of Ancient Religions in both the Faculty of Arts & Philosophy and the Faculty of Theology (de Buck: 1939: 3, 5, 22-23).

¹⁶⁸ Kraemer 1938: 61sq. On Kraemer's Barthianism, cf., e.g., Kraemer 1945; Bronkhorst 1946: 322-323; Jansen Schoonhoven 1983: 108.

¹⁶⁹ Van Leeuwen 1959: 100-101, *passim*.

¹⁷⁰ Kraemer (1959: 19) quoted Kuyper on the *sensus divinitatis in ipsis medullis et visceribus hominis hominis infixus* ("the sense for the divine fixed into the very

innards and bowels of man"). Through it, says Kuyper (1909, III: 448, 449, 451-453, 563) all humans possess *cognitio Dei concreata*, natural knowledge about God.

¹⁷¹ Kraemer 1959: 19-20; 1938: 120-121, 133-134; 1963: 311. Kraemer's other teachers were Kristensen and Chantepie, and he was also influenced by Pascal, Kierkegaard, and Blumhardt (Van Leeuwen 1959: 150; Jansen Schoonhoven 1983: 105).

¹⁷² Kraemer 1938: vi.

¹⁷³ Kraemer distinguished "three fundamental approaches to life and the world:" the naturalist, the rationalist, and the prophetic. The aim of the first was the realisation of the self, that of the second was rational comprehension, and of the third was being receptive to God's revelation. The first two were anthropocentric; the third was theocentric (Kraemer 1937: 18-20).

¹⁷⁴ Kraemer 1937: 21-25; 1938: 101 sq.

¹⁷⁵ Kraemer 1937: 5-25; 1938: 142 sq. Cf. also Van Leeuwen 1959: 100-103, 114-120; Jansen Schoonhoven 1983: 109.

¹⁷⁶ Kraemer 1938: 445; cf. also 1937: 27-28.

¹⁷⁷ Kraemer 1959: 14, 17-18, 45; Berkhof 1954: 29; Van Leeuwen 1959: 119.

¹⁷⁸ Kraemer 1959: 39-43; Van Leeuwen 1959: 119.

¹⁷⁹ Kraemer 1960: xxv; cf. also Kraemer 1959: 34-38; Van Leeuwen 1959: 119.

¹⁸⁰ Van Leeuwen 1959: 119.

¹⁸¹ Kraemer 1938: 135-136, his italics; cf. also Van Leeuwen 1959: 119.

¹⁸² Van Veen 1947.

¹⁸³ Not unlike Van der Leeuw (1933: 647; 1948a: 665) finding a *duplex ordo* attitude in the R.C. *simplex ordo* theology of E. Przywara as early as 1928.

¹⁸⁴ Pace Van Leeuwen 1959: 115.

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HOW DO YOU SAY "GOD" IN DAKOTA?
EPISTEMOLOGICAL PROBLEMS
IN THE CHRISTIANIZATION OF NATIVE AMERICANS

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Summary

This essay explores some of the interpretive problems posed by the missionary work of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions among Minnesota's Dakota Indians in the mid-nineteenth century. Since "success" in conversion has often been defined largely in terms of Native American assimilation to white American societal norms, I argue that the Dakotas' acceptance of a Christianity that was preached to them in their own language poses a problem for understanding what "conversion" meant in this case. The difficulty of knowing what Christianity meant to the Dakotas, a difficulty I see as rooted in the problems attendant upon translation, can be illustrated by showing how distorted some of the missionaries' translations of Dakota religious ideas into English were. Their translation errors took two forms: the postulation of a similarity in reference between Dakota and English terms where it did not exist (as with the English words "god" and "spirit" and what the missionaries identified as their Dakota counterparts), or, conversely, the heightening of differences between Dakota and Protestant Christian religiosity (an effect achieved by associating Dakota terms with English pejoratives). I argue that what unites these two differing types of distortive translations is the missionaries' failure to understand the conceptual universe, or "deep structure," underlying the Dakota language. And since they failed to perceive the holistic character of this conceptual system, the missionaries may have concluded that they had effected conversions among the Dakotas when they had only scratched the surface of Dakota religiosity.

1. WHY Do We Say "God" in Dakota?

When I recently began studying the Dakota language, one of the first things I learned to say was, "How do you say this in Dakota?" When I obtained this knowledge, it occurred to me that I could translate the title of this paper, which I had settled on months earlier. When I first voiced this translation, I realized how well the result served to illustrate the types of questions I plan to address here. The Dakota title would run, "*De Dakota ia toked eyapi he God?*" and

it reminded me of the old jingle from the children's television show *Sesame Street*: "One of these things is not like the others." For an English speaker, "God" and "Dakota" are the two recognizable words in a string of which the rest are unknown, down to the level of identifying them as nouns, verbs, and so on. For a Dakota speaker who knows no English, however, the word "God" bears a linguistic similarity to the Coke bottle that drops from the sky in the film *The Gods Must Be Crazy*—it is completely unfamiliar, and thus it could be anything (again, noun, verb, adjective, etc.), and it could mean anything.

If I were a nineteenth-century missionary, then, going to live among the Dakotas and trying to learn their language, and I asked the question, "De Dakota ia toked eyapi he God?," my Dakota informant would need to ask me another question before he or she could answer. He or she would say, "God taku kapi he?:" "What does 'God' mean?" And at this point I would realize that my problems have only just begun.

When evangelists from the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions began proselytizing the Dakotas in the Minnesota Territory in 1834, they faced precisely these problems, which I refer to in my subtitle as the "epistemological problems" attendant upon Dakota (and all Native American) conversion to Christianity when missionaries used the native language to convey their Christian message. The question posed by my fictional Dakota interlocutor above encapsulates these problems nicely: What does God mean? What *could* "God," or a host of other Christian theological terms, mean in the language of a culture that had no corresponding referents? And, therefore, when Native Americans converted, to what did they think they were converting? Such questions have long vexed scholars of Indian missions, inasmuch as they point to related issues like the depth and "sincerity" of Native American conversion and, ergo, to the "success" or "failure" of the mission enterprises.

Such questions, of course, admit of no easy answers. Thus I have found that many historians of Indian-white relations tend to leave them unpursued, at least in depth. Such are the authors who measure

missions' success in terms of "civilizing" their charges—that is, in urging upon them a comprehensive program of assimilation to all aspects of a "Christian civilization," thus including but not limited to religious conversion.¹ To adherents of this view, I would argue that cases where missionization occurred entirely or almost entirely in the native language clearly problematize the notion of full assimilation and call for further investigation.

James Axtell has criticized the assimilationist view on other grounds, arguing that it "errs... in reducing religion, in the manner of cultural materialists, to a mere epiphenomenon of socio-economic realities."² However, Axtell also takes issue with those who would debate the sincerity of Native American conversions by "resorting to the hobgoblin of 'syncretism,'" or positing a hybrid Christianity within which Native Americans "interpreted the new religion... in traditional terms."³ Here again, I would simply want to press the issue further and ask whether in fact this *must* have been the case when literally "traditional terms," i.e., the native language, were employed to convey Christian ideas.

It is possible, of course, that things went otherwise. Such, at least, was the fond hope of Stephen R. Riggs, a nineteenth-century American Board missionary to the Dakotas and perhaps the mission's ablest linguist. "The teachings of the Bible have wonderfully changed the meaning attached to many words in our own language," he wrote, "and they are capable of working the same transformations for the Dakotas."⁴ Riggs even waxed poetic on this topic: "As the abundant rain showers from heaven, falling upon earth's surface, often make new channels of communication with the great ocean, so mind, when invigorated and enlarged, works its thoughts out through new channels, forming new words and forms of speech, or imparting new meanings to those already in use."⁵

However, such a process clearly takes time, whether at the level of Riggs's watery metaphor or of human language, where it may well require more generations of Dakota speakers than Riggs could have lived to see. On this point I invoke George Tinker, who, in his discussion of native-language Christianity, cites linguist Noam

Chomsky's distinction between "deep" and "surface" structures in language. *Contra Axtell's* position, described above, Tinker asserts that "any new surface structure language or behavior must somehow find meaning in terms of the old deep structures... that give meaning to language or behavior. The old deep structures of meaning and cognition must continue to inform the new surface structures and give way only slowly to innovative transformation."⁶ This suggests to me that any effort to imagine what nineteenth-century Dakotas understood as Christianity requires a sufficient knowledge of the deep structures at work, of the cosmology that informed and was reflected by their language. Thus in the larger work toward which this paper represents only the preliminary thoughts, I will attempt to examine the missionaries' choices of words to convey Christian ideas against those words' usages and meanings in traditional Dakota mythological and ritual contexts. And, as incumbent as it is upon me at the scholar's remove, so much more necessary would such "deep structure" understanding have been for the missionaries themselves. They surely would have needed to know what they were replacing before they could replace it, so that they could choose the best or readiest "native equivalents" for their own theological language. In what follows here I will argue that they largely failed to do so. This, of course, should come as no surprise, but by examining particular reasons *why* they failed I hope to shed further light on the thorny problems of translation and conversion.

2. What's the Problem?

When the American Board inaugurated its efforts among the Dakotas, its evangelists took learning the native language as their first order of business. Two of the missionaries, the brothers Samuel and Gideon Pond, started this process while they were still en route to the Minnesota territory from their home state of Connecticut. On their way up the Mississippi River, their boat stopped at Prairie du Chien, a trading post where a number of Dakotas were exchanging goods. The first thing they learned to say was, "How do you say this in Dakota?"

that handy phrase, taught to them by the trader. Thus equipped, the missionaries proceeded to inquire after the Dakota names for the merchandise in the trader's store.⁷ The technique served them well, and in the subsequent two years they rapidly compiled a Dakota lexicon of several thousand words. This list served as the basis for what would later become the first published Dakota-English dictionary, after other American Board missionaries had added their knowledge to the Ponds'.

The rapidity and extent of this work suggest that the Ponds had great linguistic abilities, and such was almost certainly the case. They certainly had zeal for the task, as was evidenced when the elder brother, Samuel, accompanied the Dakota band that lived nearest his home on a winter deer hunt not long after settling in the Territory. "The language... was the game I went to hunt," he wrote, "and I was as eager in pursuit of that as the Indians were of deer."⁸ However, I would like to call attention to some of the difficulties inherent even in this most basic level of translation.

The American philosopher W.V. Quine raised some intriguing thoughts about this process. Given a situation in which a native language is to be learned "directly by observing what the natives say under observed circumstances," a linguist will make "a first crude beginning by compiling native terms for environing objects; but here already he is really imposing his own patterns."⁹ He goes on:

The linguist may establish inductively... that a certain... expression is one to which natives can be prompted to assent by the presence of a rabbit... and not otherwise. The linguist is then warranted in according the native expression the cautious translation 'There's a rabbit,' "There we have a rabbit," "Lo! a rabbit," "Lo! rabbithood again"... [This] recognizes the native expression as in effect a rabbit-heralding sentence. But the linguist's bold further step, in which he imposes his own object-positing pattern without special warrant, is taken when he equates the native expression or any part of it with the term "rabbit."¹⁰

Indeed, says Quine, we would have no way of *really* knowing whether the native expression means "rabbit," "undetached rabbit part," or "temporal stage in the life of a rabbit."¹¹ Thus in philosophy of language terms, we would have the *sense* of the native phrase,

but not the *reference*. We would, however, automatically render the term as “rabbit,” but this is only because we arbitrarily assume that the natives’ worldview is such they see objects in the same way we do—in other words, we posit a deep structure on the natives’ behalf, one which may or may not be correct. And if translations of object names are so “tenuous and arbitrary,”¹² how much more complicated will the process be when it takes up concepts, and what will the outcome really entail? In the case of translating Christianity, failure to appreciate sufficiently the ideological differences between relative native and English terms could easily result in a missionary’s thinking he had effected a “change in meaning” when he had only scratched the surface (structure).

However, there is a flip side to Quine; someone might opt to translate the “rabbit-heralding” term by one of what Quine calls its “perverse alternatives,” such as “undetached rabbit part” or “rabbit stage.”¹³ In this case the translator would rely on the notion that the natives’ worldview is *so* different from his or her own that when they look at a rabbit they actually perceive something quite other; he or she would also likely qualify the translation by arguing that the term is extremely difficult to render adequately in English. E.E. Evans-Pritchard brought up this possibility in his *Theories of Primitive Religion*. “The difficulties were, I believe, increased, and the resultant distortion made greater, by the coining of special terms to describe primitive religions, thereby suggesting that the mind of the primitive was so different from ours that its ideas could not be expressed in our vocabularies and categories.”¹⁴ Here we see the sin of over-exoticizing the religions formerly known as “primitive,” which presents no less (but, I would argue, also no more) a caricature of the traditions in question than does the prior approach, which paints native religions merely as Christianity *manqué*.

In the case of the American Board’s Dakota mission, the truth of the translation enterprise definitely lies somewhere in the middle of these two alternatives. Or, to be more precise, the missionaries erred in both directions, depending upon the topic at hand. I argue that this dual margin of error resulted from the missionaries’ fundamental

inability to perceive first, that the Dakotas possessed a full, integrated religious system, and second, just how different that system really was from the missionaries' own.

3. Are We Not Gods?

Examples of the first type of error—positing similarities of reference where they don't really exist—can be clustered around the general ideas of “god” and “spirit,” encompassing the Dakota phrases *Wakan Tanka*, *Taku Wakan*, *Taku Skan Skan*, *sicun*, and *wasicun*. My main point in this section is that it is as difficult to find a referent for “god” as for “God” in Dakota, and that the missionaries made a faulty reification in conveying the notion that the Dakotas were polytheists.

The missionaries agreed with one another in their assessment that, prior to their exposure to the evangelists, the Dakotas had no God, no Supreme Being or “Great Spirit.” The Dakota term that has come to be used to designate the Christian God is *Wakan Tanka*, which the missionaries averred only came into use following evangelization. “It is indeed true that Dakotas do sometimes appeal to the Great Spirit when in counsel with the white men,” wrote Gideon Pond, “but it is because they suppose him to be the object of the white man's worship, or because they themselves have embraced the christian [sic] doctrines. Still it is generally the *interpreter* who makes the appeal to the Great Spirit, when the speaker really appealed to the *Taku-wakan*, and not to the *wakan-Tanka*.¹⁵ The difference would be significant. *Wakan*, of course, is one of the untranslatable terms challenged by Evans-Pritchard; it has long been employed in religious studies as a synonym for *mana*, and, as an adjective, can modify virtually any noun in Dakota inasmuch as the named entity exhibits the quality of powerlessness. When translators do provide an English definition of *wakan*, they usually ascribe to it the sense of “mysterious,” or, nearly as often, “sacred.” Thus *Wakan Tanka* would signify the “Great Mystery” or “Great Sacred” while *Taku Wakan* literally means “something mysterious or sacred,” and would not appear to denote an object that easily corresponds to God or god. Yet Pond declared that “the general name for the gods in their dialect is this, *Taku Wakan*,” and he

went on to suggest that the Dakotas recognized "tens of thousands of divinities."¹⁶

We should not be surprised that, where they found indeterminate terms such as *Taku Wakan*, the missionaries rushed to attach them to objects in the native cosmos; after all, they came to the mission field with the assumption that "in terms to express abstract ideas the Dakota language is undoubtedly defective."¹⁷ In so doing, they made Quine's type of mistake, but for Evans-Pritchard's type of reason. A strong case can be made, however, that the abstract senses of the terms hold primacy over any specifically denominated "gods" in the traditional understanding. A contemporary Lakota author describes the case thus: "Often, through the powerful language of metaphor, the sacred world is delineated and anthropomorphized, a process by which the various dimensions of the personality of the Wakan... are made comprehensible and visible to the mind of the Native."¹⁸ Of course, metaphorical usage differs substantially from literal meaning, and the view expressed here conforms to that of Ruth Underhill, who argued for all Native American traditions that "the word Supernatural must be used rather than any more definite term, such as *spirit* or *divinity*. Often the Indians did not think of the Powers, which they believed existed and influenced their lives, in such personal terms as does the white man."¹⁹

Of course caution must be employed in projecting such recent understandings into the minds of Dakotas who lived a hundred and fifty years ago, but an illustration from the missionaries' own writings does plenty to show the difficulty that ensued when they tried to convey a sense of the nature of the Dakota gods. Embarking on a list of these entities, Gideon Pond named first the *Onktehi*, a "wakan object" variously characterized in the course of the next few paragraphs as "this god," "these gods," "this family of divinities," "he," "they," "the male and the female."²⁰ Clearly the structure and nature of *Onktehi* remains ambiguous at the conclusion of this description, and the example should at least raise, if not answer, any number of questions about the Dakota meaning of even one term thought to have "god" for a referent.

The plot thickens if we take another example, the Dakotas' *Taku Skan Skan*. Pond's account on this score runs as follows: "The signification of the term is, *that which stirs*. This god is too subtle in essence to be perceived by the human senses, and is as subtle in his disposition as in his being. Though invisible, he is ubiquitous... His symbol is the boulder, and hence boulders are universally worshiped by the Dakotas. He lives, also, in what is termed 'the four winds.'"²¹ Contrast this with our modern Lakota's conception of *Taku Skan Skan* as "that which moves and causes all of life to move or to live, as though the entire universe were injected or infused with a common source and type of energy." It dwells in all things in the universe, and represents "the mysterious force that makes all things and beings relatives to each other and to their common ancestor."²² Again we see that to give *Taku Skan Skan* the appellation of "a god," even a "subtle" and "ubiquitous" one, amounts to a serious reduction in the expanse of the Dakota term's meaning.

As a final note on this subject, I would call attention to perhaps the most irresponsible missionary use of the term "god" to describe any object of Dakota reverence. Stephen Riggs wrote, "as the Europeans break in upon savage life with their strange faces, language, and dress; with their wonderful horses, their fire-speaking guns, and their bird-like ships, the Indians, either seeing or hearing from afar, and the marvel growing with each league it travels, called them gods, or *wa-she'-choon*."²³ The Dakota word *wasicun* does, in fact, mean one who has *sicun*, which can be defined as "that mysterious spiritlike power which all things possess," "which can be added to, expanded, and utilized to help others," and is obtained by a person when one of its non-human possessors conveys it to him or her in the course of a visionary experience.²⁴ It is possible that the Dakotas gave white men such a name; James Axtell adduces a number of examples where white men's technological superiority appears to have led Native Americans to view the newcomers as having spiritual power. But even Axtell marks the difference between "spiritually powerful men," akin to native shamans, and "gods," which he recognizes as the way "the Europeans put it."²⁵ Furthermore, Axtell cites

evidence that beyond initial contact, the Indians' previously apparent reverence often wore off. Thus we would be justified in questioning Riggs's application of this meaning of the term to himself and his colleagues, after the Dakotas had been in contact with whites (of the French persuasion, but no less white) for well over a century by the time the American Board set up its shop. Moreover, the fact that the Frenchmen the Dakotas knew (whom Riggs admits were the first to receive the tag *wasicun*) were traders lends a distinct possibility to the contemporary Dakota view that Riggs got the name wrong altogether. Instead of *wasicun*, the proper term today is thought to be *wasicu*, with the final vowel not being nasalized. This is a distinction an English speaker would be unlikely to make, nasalized vowels not changing the meaning of words in our language. It's a distinction with a difference in Dakota, however; *wasicu* literally means "fat-taker," and it denotes, within for example the exchange situation of trade, one who keeps the best part for himself. Whatever else we make of the Dakota pantheon, then, we can surely hazard a reasonable guess that the missionaries were not in it.

4. Active and Powerful Enemies

I have suggested thus far that, as a result of ascribing to the "barbarous" Dakotas and their language certain deficiencies in thought and expression, the missionaries did far more than the Dakotas themselves ever did to people their universe with vast numbers of gods, with the result that they perceived a similarity between the Dakota worldview and their own that may or may not have existed. After all, on the evolutionary scale of religions so often employed in the nineteenth century, polytheism is merely one step down from monotheism, while belief in an impersonal force such as *mana* represented the very primordium of human religiosity. And since the early scholars of religion took the Dakota term *wakan* as a synonym for mana, it seems doubly ironic that the missionaries insisted on attaching so many names and faces to it.

But if the missionaries did not take a page from our books on the meaning of *wakan*, there were other weapons in religion's theoretical

arsenal on which they did draw. And if attributing the worship of gods to the Dakotas seemed to elevate the status of the native religion, nearly every other description of the tradition served to characterize it as “a mass of palpable absurdities.”²⁶ The most direct way for the missionaries to convey this sense of Dakota religion was to deny it the very title of religion and substitute its negative counterpart of long standing and academic acceptance, superstition—the worshipping of gods, whose “imaginary” nature was now duly stressed, motivated by fear of bad luck, which was construed as divine disfavor. Into the class of superstition thus fell all the day-to-day, personal rituals engaged in by Dakotas in order to secure the desired end of an undertaking. As a for instance, Samuel Pond adduced a number of Dakota cautionary tales about the fates that had befallen people who failed to perform the proper acts of worship before embarking on a task. Such anecdotes, Pond noted, “whether treasured up from past experience, or artfully manufactured for the occasion... furnish satisfactory proof of the folly of those who despised the traditions of their ancestors or the admonitions of their prophets... The same sort of proof supports many of the popular delusions of civilized people.”²⁷

The final part of this statement from Pond points to the next set of examples I want to present, since, after all, missionary reports on “savage superstitions” are old news. But in allowing that the Dakotas were far from the only people in the world to behave so “irrationally,” the missionaries opened themselves up to committing more small violences in their interpretations of the Dakota tradition. They did this by finding more spurious parallels to it in the non-native world, analogies not with the “true” but rather with “false” religions.

Many of the negative similarities the missionaries saw between the Dakota and other religions came from the kind of activities that can be covered by the blanket term “magic.” Thus Dakota individuals who “claimed to possess supernatural powers”—with the putative tone emphasized, of course—were styled by the missionaries “sorcerers,” “jugglers,” “faquires,” or even “thugs.”²⁸ But more revealing to me than these (most of which constitute stock tropes in the general missionary repertoire) was the section of Gideon Pond’s monograph entitled “The

Medicine Man a Priest." Here he defines the latter term in a way far different from what has normally been done in scholarly circles with regard to other Native American priestly traditions, especially those among the Pueblo peoples of the Southwest. While the Dakota "priest" does have ritual functions, his significance seems to lie for Pond in another direction:

He dictates prayers and chants, institutes fasts and feasts, dances and sacrifices. He defines sin and its opposite, and their respective consequences. In short, he imposes upon the people a system of demonism and superstition, to suit their depraved tastes, passions, caprices, circumstances, and interests as savages... a system so artfully [sic] devised, so well adapted to them, so congenial to them, that it readily weaves itself into, and becomes a part of them as really as the woof becomes a part of the texture, insuring their most obsequious submission to its demands.²⁹

He is a sinister fellow, then, this priest, and Gideon's older brother makes it abundantly clear that we should not think it is a coincidence that he bears the same title as his counterparts in the non-Dakota tradition that is most readily associated with the office. "While the rude Dakota pleases his imaginary god by purifying his hands with the smoke of cedar leaves, the enlightened ritualist glorifies the Most High by shutting out the light of the sun and burning candles at noon-day. One shakes his rattle, the other jingles his bells, and perhaps the noise of the rattle is as acceptable to God as the sound of the bells."³⁰ Thus, in contrast to early colonial reports that Algonkian powwows were servants of the Devil, the American Board missionaries to the Dakotas insinuated that the medicine men of that nation may as well have been in cahoots with the pope. But then again, depending on your point of view, that could be the same thing.

The missionaries used a thin cover of Dakota religion to inveigh just as strongly against another false religion within their own cultural purview. "Throughout the study of the Dakota religion, one is struck with the likeness of many phenomena, to some which have made great stir in our so-called Christian land, and which many believe to be a higher development of Christianity itself," wrote Stephen Riggs. This demonstrated "that a great substratum of paganism underlies our

vaunted civilization. Thus *spiritualism* is found to be an element in the religion of the Dakotas.” And in a classic example of faint praise, Riggs accorded a degree of “respectability” to the Dakota version over the mainstream American version, for “the pagan form... does not disguise, but confesses the fact, that its true character is a combination of demon-worship, sorcery, divination, and jugglery.”³¹

In this section I have called attention to another angle of the dialectic of Self and Other at work in the missionaries’ exercise of understanding (or not) Dakota religiosity and translating its tenets and practices into English, accurately or not. By employing terms like “priest” and “spiritualism,” they projected onto the Dakotas pejorative differences from themselves and pejorative similarities to the more “civilized” forms of irreligion. That there was a kind of relentless logic behind these characterizations shows through in one of the more interesting passages of Stephen Riggs’s authorship. Here he provides the reasoning behind his conclusion that the “sum and substance” of Dakota religion is *demon-worship*: “The worship of the Dakota does not fall on vacancy, but is consciously paid to spiritual beings, which can be none other than the spirits of darkness.”³² Here we have a case of the missionary suddenly affording credibility to the Dakota religion, but only in the most unkind way. In other words, the Dakota universe does contain efficacious powers. Since they are not my God, they must be of the Devil.

5. The Deep Structure, “Native” Style

This brings me to my concluding thoughts, in which I want to talk a little more about the “Dakota universe” I just mentioned. Ultimately I contend that the missionaries’ mistranslations and (usually negative) associations of Dakota ideas with other items in the Christian conceptual universe resulted from a near-total failure to appreciate the systematic nature of the Dakota religion and its place in a universe that differed dramatically from the missionaries’ own. And these were different differences than those that I have described the evangelists as perceiving; on the whole, the divergences seem to have been in

reality even more pervasive. In line with contemporary notions about a unilinear evolution of religion, the missionaries interpreted Dakota beliefs and practices as “defective” religious forms, childish imitations of the “higher” traditions. But to posit such an evolutionary scheme to begin with, of course, depends upon falsely essentializing the term “religion,” and supplying it with a Platonic Form of which most phenomena will merely seem pale reflections.

A more accurate picture emerges when we take seriously the notion that among the world’s many religions, some may have only the faintest resemblance to each other, and yet they all still may justly be identified as belonging to the category “religion.” This requires employing the polythetic mode of classification described by Jonathan Z. Smith in his essay “Fences and Neighbors: Some Contours of Early Judaism.”³³

In such a system, a member of a class can possess a sufficient number of the class’s defining characteristics to be included and yet share no characteristics in common with another member of the same class. The case is further illustrated by another one of Smith’s theoretical constructs, his distinction between “native” and “diasporic” religious traditions,³⁴ or, to put it in Catherine Albanese’s terms, between religions based on a worldview of “correspondence” and those based on a worldview of “causality.”³⁵ Causality is characterized by a separation between God and the world, the Creator and His creation, in which the transcendent deity stands outside yet causes all worldly phenomena.³⁶ On the contrary, within a correspondential system, “Human and transcendent cosmos were both made of the same ‘worldstuff’ and programmed by their own internal forces to follow similar charts of existence.”³⁷ In other words (in Dakota words), the entire cosmos is suffused by such qualities as *wakan*, *sicun*, and *skan*.

Significantly, in such a cosmos we do find magic; not magic as “protoscience,” as Ruth Underhill called it, but simply as science: “A magician was simply an adept who had learned to take advantage of the basic unity of the world.”³⁸ In this world, magic *works*. (This may serve as a good reminder that our own scientific tradition holds

true only within our worldview, which is far from the only possible configuration of reality.)

A correspondential system such as the Dakotas' clearly challenges definitions of religion based on the Christian paradigm, but it fits quite nicely with other views, such as that of anthropologist A.F.C. Wallace, for whom a religion is "a set of rituals, rationalized by myth, which mobilize supernatural powers for the purpose of achieving or preventing transformations of state in man or nature."³⁹ By putting the primary emphasis on ritual, Wallace gives us a definition friendlier to Native American religions than to Protestant Christianity, and indeed, I think much of the missionaries' failure to understand Dakota religion came from their inability to take seriously the proposition that Dakota ceremonies *meant* things, and *did* things, in the sense of having efficacy. That they *described* Dakota rituals without ever *explaining* or interpreting them illustrates this point. According to Underhill, the purpose of Native American rituals "was not worship. Perhaps it can be thought of as the renewing of a partnership between man and the Supernaturals, to the benefit of both."⁴⁰ But without a proper understanding of the correspondences between human beings and other-than-human persons in a universe like the Dakotas', one will undoubtedly come away with the notion that the religion observed consists of "confused, unsettled, and contradictory" fragments.⁴¹

Placing the focus on the efficacy of ritual within the Dakota religion thus goes a long way toward clarifying the reasons for the missionaries' incomprehension. It also accounts for the evangelists' perceptions of the similarities between the Dakota tradition, spiritualism, and Catholicism, the latter two of which also share elements of a correspondential worldview. For the spiritualists, of course, doctrines of spirit as "refined matter" implied the lack of a real distinction between the natural and supernatural, and direct contact could be made with the spirit world by those who merely shifted their own perceptions of reality. And while Christianity as a whole fits the pattern of causality, Catholic sacramentalism—from which, after all, the magic words "hocus pocus" had their very derivation—exemplifies corre-

spondential notions about the transference of spiritual qualities from the non-human to the human realms.

Of course, Protestant Christians also sought to effect transformations of their state through their religion, but on the whole these transformations were reckoned in terms of a future state of existence, and ritual was re-interpreted as a symbolization or commemoration of a transformation already worked. In fact it was extremely important for Protestants to believe that rituals devised by humans could *not* achieve what only the sovereign God could do in conveying grace. Church members gathered rather to celebrate their *belief* that certain transactions between God and humans had already taken place.

A simple analogy can provide a further illustration of how assumptions about the purpose of religious activity colored the missionaries' understanding of Dakota religion. Suppose you stumble upon a group of people playing a sport you have never seen before, in which the participants try to maneuver a ball into a goal using only their feet and legs. Your own understanding of "sport" might be such that you will automatically assume that the purpose of the game is to get the ball into the goal as many times as possible. This assumption, in turn, might tempt you to conclude that these players are just not very bright, for that purpose could be much more easily achieved with the use of the hands. If you fail to consider that the sport you are observing may have ancillary, or simply different, purposes beyond merely amassing the largest possible number of goals, you may well deem the players "deficient" in their understanding and practice of sport.⁴²

Thus when they looked at the Dakotas and saw superstition, magic, and reflections of the "papism" and spiritualism of their neighbors, Protestant missionaries missed the forest of correspondence for the trees of specific utterances and acts—which, when taken out of the system of which they partake, become essentially meaningless. But they attributed meaning—incorrectly, as I have shown—to these phenomena, and then undertook to "replace" the doctrines and practices in question with those of Protestant Christianity. In a sense, I think their failure to comprehend Dakota religiosity allowed them to see

their task as being easier than it actually was, for a far greater chasm separates correspondential from causal worldviews than that which separates poly- and monotheism. To what extent such misunderstanding led them further to think that they had effected conversions where they had not is the question I look forward to answering over the next couple of years.

So: de Dakota ia toked eyapi he "God"? How *do* you say "God" in Dakota?

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¹ See, for example, Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr.'s *Salvation and the Savage: An Analysis of Protestant Missions and American Indian Response, 1787-1862* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1965), especially Chapters 6 and 7 where he posits a direct correlation between overall cultural assimilation and religious conversion. Also, for perhaps the most extreme view from this school, see George Tinker, *Missionary Conquest: The Gospel and Native American Cultural Genocide* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), in which he alleges that missionaries' only real "success" lay in cooperating or complying with secular agents in the thoroughgoing destruction of Indian cultures.

² James Axtell, "Were Indian Conversions Bona Fide?", in *After Columbus: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 116.

³ Ibid., 116-117. For an example of the "syncretist" view that appeared some years after Axtell had published this essay, I would point to William G. McLoughlin's *The Cherokees and Christianity, 1794-1870: Essays on Acculturation and Cultural Persistence*, edited by Walter H. Conser, Jr. (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1994), a collection of essays published posthumously. *Contra* the syncretist view, Axtell wanted to argue that Indian conversion were "bona fide" changes of heart and belief. However, when he cites as proof the confessions made by Massachusetts converts in John Eliot's "praying town" of Natick, I would counter with George Tinker's reminder (ironic in view of his basically assimilationist argument, for which see n. 1) that these confessions "present inherent problems. Most importantly, they have been preserved only in English. The native utterances of the speakers are lost and cannot be reclaimed even remotely. Second, Eliot was the only English translator present at the examination." See Axtell, *After Columbus*, 114-115,

and Tinker, *Missionary Conquest*, 36–40; esp. p. 38, where he addresses Axtell's argument directly.

⁴ Stephen R. Riggs, "The Dakota Language," *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society* I (1850–1856), 98. It should be noted that the case of the American Board mission to the Dakotas differs from the case of the Baptist effort among the Cherokees, led by Evan Jones, covered extensively in McLoughlin's *The Cherokees and Christianity*, most significantly in the fact that the Presbyterians' and Congregationalists' strict Calvinist theology led them to explicitly reject the possibilities of syncretism or hybridism apparently tolerated (and perhaps encouraged) by Jones. Riggs and his colleagues appear to have sincerely intended to replace wholesale the Dakotas' traditional beliefs with their form of Christianity. In this they were more similar to Eliot and their other Puritan forebears in demanding that would-be converts undergo an examination for conviction of sin. But, as per n. 3, I would maintain that the same "epistemological problems" ensued when the examination was carried out in the native language.

⁵ Riggs, "Dakota Language," 92.

⁶ Tinker, *Missionary Conquest*, 34.

⁷ Gary Clayton Anderson, in his introduction to Samuel W. Pond, *The Dakotas or Sioux in Minnesota as They Were in 1834* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1986), viii. Pond's ethnography was originally published in *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society* XII (1908): 319–501.

⁸ Samuel W. Pond, "Two Missionaries in the Sioux Country," *Minnesota History* XXI (1940), 28.

⁹ W.V. Quine, "Speaking of Objects," *Ontological Relativity and Other Essays* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), 1–2.

¹⁰ Ibid., 2. Emphasis in the original.

¹¹ Quine, "Ontological Relativity," *Ontological Relativity and Other Essays*, 30.

¹² Quine, "Speaking of Objects," 25.

¹³ Quine, "Ontological Relativity," 34.

¹⁴ E.E. Evans-Pritchard, *Theories of Primitive Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 12.

¹⁵ Gideon Pond, "Dakota Superstitions," *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society* II (1860–1867), 218. See also Stephen Riggs, *Tah-koo Wah-kan; or, The Gospel Among the Dakotas* (Boston: Congregational Publishing Society, 1869; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1972), 73.

¹⁶ Pond, "Dakota Superstitions," 217.

¹⁷ Riggs, "Dakota Language," 97.

¹⁸ Arthur Amiotte, "Our Other Selves," *I Become Part of It: Sacred Dimensions in Native American Life*, edited by D.M. Dooling and Paul Jordan-Smith (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1989), 163.

- ¹⁹ Ruth Underhill, *Red Man's Religion: Beliefs and Practices of the Indians North of Mexico* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 5.
- ²⁰ Pond, "Dakota Superstitions," 219-220.
- ²¹ Ibid., 230-231.
- ²² Amiotte, "Our Other Selves," 171.
- ²³ Riggs, *Tah-koo Wah-kan*, 73.
- ²⁴ Amiotte, "Our Other Selves," 170.
- ²⁵ James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 10.
- ²⁶ Samuel Pond, *The Dakotas in Minnesota*, 105.
- ²⁷ Ibid., 107.
- ²⁸ See, e.g., Samuel Pond, *The Dakotas in Minnesota*, 105; Gideon Pond, "Dakota Superstitions," 242, 251-252; Riggs, *Tah-koo Wah-kan*, 94-97.
- ²⁹ Gideon Pond, "Dakota Superstitions," 242-243.
- ³⁰ Samuel Pond, *The Dakotas in Minnesota*, 105-106.
- ³¹ Riggs, *Tah-koo Wah-kan*, 97-98.
- ³² Ibid., 92-93.
- ³³ Jonathan Z. Smith, "Fences and Neighbors: Some Contours of Early Judaism," *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 4-5.
- ³⁴ Jonathan Z. Smith, *Map Is Not Territory: Studies in the History of Religions*, University of Chicago ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), xii-xv.
- ³⁵ Catherine L. Albanese, *Corresponding Motion: Transcendental Religion and the New America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1977), Chapter 1. I am indebted to Dr. Albanese for many of the insights on correspondence that follow.
- ³⁶ Ibid., 4.
- ³⁷ Ibid., 8.
- ³⁸ Ibid., 13. The term "protoscience" is used by Ruth Underhill in *Red Man's Religion*, 22-23.
- ³⁹ Anthony F.C. Wallace, *Religion: An Anthropological View* (New York: Random House, 1966), 107.
- ⁴⁰ Underhill, *Red Man's Religion*, 4.
- ⁴¹ Samuel Pond, *The Dakotas in Minnesota*, 85.
- ⁴² I owe this analogy to the insight of my brother, Bennett Siems, whom I wish to thank for the suggestion.

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KO HUNG'S DISCOURSE OF *HSIEN*-IMMORTALITY:
A TAOIST CONFIGURATION OF AN ALTERNATE IDEAL
SELF-IDENTITY

CHI-TIM LAI

Summary

This study seeks to investigate the ideological base underlying Ko Hung's new Taoist discourse of *hsien*-immortality in early Six Dynasties China. Our analysis will show the symbolic and discursive complex of Ko Hung's *hsien*-immortality, his self-understanding, and his reappropriation of the ancient Chinese religious tradition of physical immortality, in particular in relation to his own emerging historical consciousness. In so doing, it can serve as one of the keys to the understanding of an early Taoist master's religious discourse of *hsien*-immortality which functions as an organizing principle that orders the way he experiences the social and cultural world, as an ideological resolution for his feelings of incongruence between outer reality and inner world, and, finally, as a soteriological vision of an alternate ideal self-identity in contrast to the Han idealized Confucian sage. The construction of Taoist discourse of *hsien*-identity, instanced in Ko Hung's *Pao-p'u tzu nei-p'ien*, should, therefore, not be seen as something abstract and arbitrary without the roots in socio-cultural reality, but a new formation and shape for the Six Dynasties literati of an alternate idealized self-identity.

Introduction

They walk through the raging fire and are not burned; stepping lightly, they cross gloomy torrents; they fly in the pure air, with the wind as harness and the clouds as chariots. Raising their eyes, they reach the Purple Pole, lowering them, they settle into *Kun-lun*.

They often mount to the paradise of *T'ai-ching*; or fly in the Purple Firmament; or travel to *Hsiuan-chou*; or live in *Pan-t'ung*. . . [They] enlarge their boundaries to include all of space; go where they will.¹

Thus Ko Hung (A.D. 283-343) describes how Taoist *hsien*-immortals enjoy their ability to be ubiquitous and to fly through Heaven and Earth.

Indeed, longing to become an immortal and to ascend to the paradise of *hsien* are conspicuous motifs seen in ancient Chinese lit-

erature. For instance, in the *Chuang-tzu* (fourth to second century B.C.),² a transcendent figure like Ko Hung's *hsien*-immortal, namely, a divine man (*shen-jen*),³ is depicted in the following way:

In the mountains of far-off *Ku-yi* there lives a *shen-jen* (divine man) whose skin and flesh are like ice and snow, who is gentle as a virgin. He does not eat the five grains but sucks in the wind and drinks the dew; he rides the vapor of the clouds, yokes flying dragons to his chariot, and roams beyond the four seas.⁴

However, in light of the ancient Chinese religious imagination, such a heavenly ascent, a characteristic of immortals' transcendent nature and ability, is not expressed as a sort of journey occurring after one's death. Instead, *hsien*-immortality is a continued state of this worldly life.⁵ That is, instead of being a journey from one's death to his/her arrival in heaven, the ancient Chinese concept of immortality, however, means "non-aging, non dying" (*pu lao pu ssu*) and "nourish [one's material] life in order not to die" (*yang sheng pu ssu*).⁶

The *Shou-wen chieh-tzu* (*Explaining the Graphs and Explicating their Combinations*), an early Han etymological dictionary, glosses the word "*hsien*" as "having a long life and ascending to heaven."⁷ In addition, early Han rhapsodies (in the middle of the second century B.C.) like "*Yüan yu*" (Far-off Journey) in the *Ch'u tz'u* (The Songs of the South)⁸ and "*Yüan ssu*" (Journey to the Romoteness) by Liu Hsiang (79 B.C.-A.D. 8) express the wishful *hsien*-thinking of embarking on a journey to heaven without dying. As such, the ancient Chinese ideal of immortality (*hsien*) essentially includes the following two elements: "deathlessness" (*pu ssu*) and "heavenly ascent" (*sheng t'ien*).⁹ A *hsien*-immortal is recognized as a deathless being who "rides the vapor of the clouds and yokes flying dragons to his chariot."¹⁰

Despite many scholarly attempt to chart the origins, continuity, and changes of the ancient Chinese doctrine of *hsien*-immorality, few students of ancient Chinese religious thought have paid enough attention to the ideological base underlying the ancient Chinese concept(s) of *hsien*-immortality; and few think of them according to individual thinkers' lives, effective histories, dispositions, and social contexts.

Theoretically speaking, in as much as a proponent of a given idea or belief is an individual in history and society, Karl Mannheim has argued that, "the 'existence' that surrounds a person is never 'existence as such,' but is always a concrete historical form of social existence."¹¹ Applying that consciousness to this study, it will be my presupposition that not until a historical and social study begins to examine the relationship between such ancient Chinese wishful thinking as the immortality of the body and the actual "social existence" of the proponents of such ideas does the belief of *hsien*-immortality makes sense, either for the writers in the past or for us today.

Moreover, this study places this theme within the theoretical framework in which the ancient Chinese concept of immortality was conceived of as an unrealizable utopia that emerged from an "incongruence" occurred between our Taoist protagonist's unfulfilled tendencies and the existing social order. According to Mannheim, this type of utopian mentality, as a manifestation of social and historical incongruence, often in the form wishful thinking,

has always figured in human affairs. When the imagination finds no satisfaction in existing reality, it seeks refuge in wishfully constructed places and periods. Myths, fairy tales, other-worldly promises of religion, humanistic fantasies, travel romances, have continually changing expressions of that which was lacking in actual life.¹²

In other words, because of an incongruence with the given reality, utopian thought tends to burst the bonds of the existing order. To some extent, this transforming effect may be focused on the existing historical-social situation. Nevertheless, Mannheim defines utopia as differing from ideology in that the former seems unrealizable in the given social/historical order, but projects transcendent ideas into "other" time and space. Hence, notwithstanding its unrealizability in the reality, the function of utopian ideas, argues Mannheim, is to free utopia from the bonds of the existing order.

In light of this theoretical framework for the social and historical incongruence embodied in utopian mentalities, I, in this paper, shall analyze the symbolic complex of Ko Hung's independent *hsien*-discourse, his self-understanding, and his reappropriation of the tradi-

tion of *hsien*-immortality, in particular in relation to his own emerging historical experiences of incongruence. In other words, aiming at a deeper interpretation of the internal dynamics that created Ko Hung's discourse, my study will focus upon the following two problems: (1) the interpretive position of Ko Hung's discourse; and (2) the concrete interplay of the incongruent forms of social/cultural existence with the corresponding incongruence that informs his discourse of *hsien*-immortality. In so doing, it will be my contention that Ko Hung's "obsessive" pursuit of bodily immortality and his bearing of a transmitted tradition should not only be considered as an intellectual-conceptual dimension of practice, as something as abstract and arbitrary without the roots in empirical reality.¹³ Rather, I shall argue that Ko Hung's Taoist religion of *hsien*-immortality functions as an organizing principle that orders the way our protagonist experiences the social/cultural world, as an ideological resolution for his incongruence between outer reality and inner world, and, finally, as a soteriological vision of a perfect self-identity.

Let us first glimpse the (incongruent) intellectual milieu within which Ko Hung's religious discourse was nourished and configured.

The Intellectual Milieu Periods in Which Ko Hung's Discourse was Situated (3rd-4th centuries A.D.) and the Flourish of Writings about the Immortals

The period of the Six Dynasties (3rd-6th centuries A.D.) is generally regarded as the beginning of medieval China.¹⁴ Like the Dark Ages in European history, the Six Dynasties period is often conceived to be one of gloom and disorder, little more than a confusing series of dynastic names. And yet, due to the uprising and invasion of barbarian tribes, the Chinese Western Chin dynasty was forced to retreat to the south of the Yangtze river. Hence, that period of Chinese history is often summed up by the phrase, "The Five Barbarians brought disorder to China" (*wu-hu luan hua*).

In contrast to such a provisional view concerning the history of the Six dynasties, modern scholars have discerned an underlying political continuity in its ruling classes,¹⁵ as well as cultural creativity,

diversity, and proliferation. In one typical scholarly view stressing this historical occurrence with particular regard to the creative cultural aspect in the Six Dynasties, Li Ze-hou, a modern Chinese philosopher of aesthetics, has rightly argued that,

The Wei-Jin era (A.D. 220-420) witnessed a re-emancipation and great activity in the ideological domain where many questions were put forward and much progress was made. Though in duration, breadth, scope, and diversity of schools it could not match the Pre-Qin, nonetheless, the profundity and purity attained by its speculative philosophy were unprecedented.¹⁶

In what follows, I shall briefly lay out three representative cultural aspects that characterize the intellectual milieu of the early period of Six Dynasties and, specifically, the transitional period between the Western Chin (A.D. 265-317) and Eastern Chin (A.D. 317-420) in which Ko Hung was born and situated.

The first cultural change that emerged after the fall of the Later Han Dynasty (A.D. 25-220) was manifested by the decline of Han Confucian orthodoxy. Since the Emperor Wu of the Han dynasty had established the classics of Confucius as the standard measure of intellectual and cultural uniformity at the expense of other schools of thoughts, Confucian teachings and rituals (the Teaching of Names) became a dominant value-system legitimating the current systems of governing and education. From the perspective of Confucian literati in the Han, the compulsion to standardize human thought and social conduct might be explained as having developed out of a particular cultural concern.¹⁷ However, as things in history often go to extreme sides, the ideological standardization of religious rites and social regulations based upon the Confucian tradition resulted in a monolithic natural disposition, value-system, and norm of social behavior being imposed upon the literati at this time. For instance, Pan Ku (A.D. 32-92), the historian who wrote the dynastic history of the Former Han Dynasty, the *Han shu* (*History of Former Han*), insisted that the Confucian standard was the only criteria for regulating human intercourse. In a chapter of the *Han shu*, "Monograph on Rites and Music" (*Li-yueh chih*), he writes,

For those who are active in affairs of state, if for one morning they fail in the rites, then ruin and disorder will prevail. Man holds within him the positive and negative energies of Heaven and Earth; he possesses feelings of joy, anger, grief and happiness. Heaven has endowed him a natural disposition [by which] he can regulate [these feelings]. The sages were able to make regulations for them, but unable to put an end to them. So imitating Heaven and Earth they fashioned rites and music, by which to gain access to the gods, establish human relationships, correct the feelings and disposition, and regulate all things.¹⁸

Nevertheless, with the fall of the Han empire, as well as the decline of its dominant value system at the end of the second century, these cultural constraints changed.¹⁹

As a significant sign testifying to a cultural change in the early Six Dynasties, literati of that period had no longer restricted themselves to education in the Five Classics. Instead, they substituted the fading ideal personality of Han literati—a specialist exclusively in the classics of Confucius (*t'ung-ju*)—for an alternative ideal image: a specialist in all aspects of human life (*t'ung-jen*).²⁰ In the Han, any intellectual inquiry into the transcendent and eternal realm beyond the natural world most probably would have been rebuked by orthodox Confucians because the latter reject any belief in the actual existence of spirits and gods.²¹ Hence, given the intellectual acclaim of the ideal image of *t'ung-jen*, it should come as no surprise that the literati of the Six Dynasties have an unprecedented preoccupation with matters like the immortality of the body, the fate of humans in the afterlife, the esoteric arts and magic, and the causal relation between merit and punishment. In particular, the proliferation of the corpus of literary writings concerning the marvelous, like the *Sou-shen chi*, the *Po-wu chih*, and the *Shen-hsien chuan*, convincingly demonstrates the new cultural outlook of the period of Six Dynasties.

A second aspect of the cultural shift in the Six Dynasties can be discerned in a recurrent rhetorical question that corresponds with the intellectual inquiry into the eternal realm beyond nature. Literati of the Six Dynasties became more conscious of enquiring the ground of one's "natural" self-identity regardless of the existing "social" identity. In contrast to the previous Han literati's practice of circumscribing one's identity within the framework of Confucian virtues like

"goodness and morality" (*jen-i*) and "loyalty and filial submission" (*chung-hsiao*), Six Dynasties' literati often initiated a genuine search for their "natural" self-identity.²² For instance, the expressive poems and deeds of Juan Chi (A.D. 210-263) and Hsi K'ang (A.D. 224-263) represent their criticism against the bonds of the existing order and their attempt to return to their "true self." When Juan Chi was accused of transgressing the Confucian ritual by seeing his sister-in-law as she was returning to her parents' home, and bidding her goodbye, he replied, "The rites were not set up for the likes of me!"²³ Likewise, Hsi K'ang deliberately criticizes the existing hypocritical Confucian values because they hinder his realization of true human nature:²⁴

The essential features of the Six Classics are restraint and guidance; but what pleases human nature is following one's desires. Restraint and guidance thus go against our wishes, where by following our desires we attain the natural. This being the case, attainment of the natural does not from the restraining and guiding Six Classics, and the root of perfecting one's nature does not rely on the laws and rituals which go against our feeling.²⁵

According to Fukunaga Mitsuji, both Juan Chi's and Hsi K'ang's self-consciousness against the existing social order and for a liberated self-identity actually reflected the Six Dynasties literati's awakening from a "false" and illusive self-identity previously defined by social regulation and values. As a result of that sort of awakening, or, in Fukunaga's term, "wisdom" (*t'i-kuan*), a new cultural tendency cherishing the "life of solitude" prevailed at that time. Fukunaga also suggests that once literati of the Six Dynasties favored a genuine quest for the ultimate or eternal ground of their self-identities by breaking the bonds of existing social order, their spiritual world immediately opened into the immense world of Chinese immortals.²⁶ In this light, the conclusion that there may have been an effective affinity between the literati's preoccupation with their natural selves and the prevalence of the religious discourses of *hsien*-immortality in the period of Six Dynasties sounds plausible. In sum, because of a new cultural concern, the problems of how and where one's subjectivity can be truly grounded and actualized shape the intellectual milieu and characteristics of the Six Dynasties period.

Thirdly, my cultural characterization of the Six Dynasties cannot avoid eliciting the then literati's serious reflection on the issue of the transience of human life. Hundred of thousands died in the decades of disturbance in China beginning at the end of the second century. The following official reports evince the amazing decline in population during that period. In A.D.157, an official census put the population in the later Han period at 10,677,960 households and 56,486,856 individuals.²⁷ In A.D. 280, when the Western Chin empire was at its peak, the population was reportedly 2,459,840 households and 16,163,863 individuals, only about 1/4 of that of the Han.²⁸ Such a rapid decline of population is believed to have continued until the Eastern Chin period. A memorial in A.D. 363 written by Huan Wen, a commander-in-chief of the empire's troops, states that the population in South China was even less than that of a province under the Han.²⁹ In addition to the above figures, the concrete picture of the social disturbance and of the suffering of the mass by the end of third century can be grasped in the following court-record.

After the reign of Emperor Hui (A.D. 290-306) both administration and culture declined. By the *Yung-chia* period (A.D. 307-312) trouble and disturbances were very wide-spread. From Yung-chou eastward many suffered from hunger and poverty. People were sold [as slave]. Vagrants became countless. In the six provinces of Yu, Ping, Ssu, Chi, Ch'iin, and Yung there were a bad plague of locusts. Grass, trees, and hair of cattle and horses were all eaten up [by the locusts]. Further virulent disease accompanied the famine. Also the people were murdered by bandits. *The rivers were filled with floating corpses; bleached bones covered the fields* [emphasis mine].³⁰

Since death was a tragic and cataclysmic reality in the people's daily life during that period, not surprisingly, it attracted a great deal of attention and sentiment from the literati of the Six Dynasties.

Among the literati who sentimentally reflect about their feelings about and fear of the transience of human life, Wang Hsi-chih (A.D. 303-361), one of the best known Chinese calligraphers, is most famous.³¹ According to Fukunaga, expressions of grief and mourning over the death of his relatives and best friends cover a large proportion of Wang Hsi-chih's calligraphic scripts.³² It is said that

when his daughter-in-law and granddaughters died of illness, Wang mourned for them painfully.³³ And yet, when his best friends died, Wang reported that his pain even reached inside his five internal viscera (*wu-nei*).³⁴

Indeed, what Wang has expressed of the bitterness of his dead friends and family is not only an isolated voice, but actually reflects a general cultural tendency and intellectual anxiety during that period. Literati of that period were characterized by their sentimental recognition of the finitude of human life and the finality of death. To further exemplify this concern, one might quote Hsi K'ang's poems, which most profoundly resonate with the cultural sentiment of that period. For instance, one of his poems says, "Life so like a floating abode is briefly manifest, suddenly ended."³⁵ Paradoxically, it was from the issue of human death and the recognition of transience of human life that the literati of the Six Dynasties celebrated their driving wish for liberation from fatalism. As a specific cultural phenomenon, their quest for a long life and their dream of a transcendent world of *hsien*-immortals have few precedents. Such a quest for a transcendent world can be exemplified by Hsi K'ang's poem:

Man's life so hurried,
heaven and earth so enduring.
A span of one hundred years,
who terms this long life?
I long to ascend to the immortals,
cross over to incorruptibility.³⁶

The Interpretative Themes of Ko Hung's Discourse of hsien-Immortality

Given its scope and complexity in systematizing, rationalizing, and recreating the ancient Chinese religious traditions of the nourishing of life and the cult of *hsien*-immortality, Ko Hung's *Pao-p'u tzu nei-pien* (*Inner Chapters of the Pao-p'u tzu*, hereafter *Inner Chapters*) is undoubtedly a classic of the tradition. The author presents sophisticated arguments on a variety of subjects: (1) proofs of the *per se* existence of immortals and transcendent state of immortality of the

body; (2) stipulation of the accessibility to the perfect state of long life to everyone, irrespective of one's social status but dependent on whether one could study deeply and strenuously cultivate the necessary esoteric methods; (3) elaboration of diverse esoteric techniques leading one to become a *hsien*-immortal; and (4) descriptions and criticism of the diverse contemporary Taoist discourses and sects.

In exploring the meanings, identity, and purpose that Ko Hung recursively intends to configure in the *Inner Chapters*, it is my contention that his discourse of *hsien*-immortality basically recreates the past religious/spiritual tradition in order to resolve his conflicts within his social and emotional milieu and to configure a new self-identity in an incongruent period of historical/social transformation. Notwithstanding the variety of subject matters expounded in the twenty total chapters of the *Inner Chapters*, I shall focus my study on the self-consciousness and interpretative positions deployed in his discourse and how they are recursively developed to resolve Ko Hung's struggle to change his own destiny and to create a new perfect self-identity as an "Earth Immortals" (*ti-hsien*) for himself. In short, I shall show that the internal dynamics of his conception of "earth immortals" precipitates his discourse of *hsien*-immortality, the dynamics of which—simultaneously doctrinal, social, and emotional—he employed to configure and represent his own ideal identity to himself and others.

The Basic Assumptions of Ko Hung's Discourse: The Recognition of the Impasse of Human Death and the Impossibility of "Rebirth" (fu-sheng) after Death

With regard to an individual's given life-span in this world, Ko Hung's beliefs are not much different from other ancient Chinese formulations in the pre-Buddhist period. For instance, in the *T'ai-ping ching* (*Book of the Great Peace* HY 1093), it states that the "essence" (literally, original or fundamental root, *pen-ken*) of thousands of creatures originates with the "Primordial Breath" (*yuan-ch'i*).³⁷ Hence, human life and the material body are considered as essentially constituted by *ch'i*, vital breath. Ko Hung shares this understanding of

human constitution and states that: "Man exists in the midst of *ch'i*, and *ch'i* is within man himself. From heaven and earth on to all creation there is nothing that does not require *ch'i* to stay alive."³⁸ In accepting this cosmogonic theory of *ch'i*, Ko Hung, like his predecessors, assumes that an individual's normal life-span has already been predestined because when a person is born, a fixed quantity of *ch'i* has been assigned to him or her.³⁹ That is, the length of one's life depends upon how much *ch'i* one has received in taking form in the womb: "Everyone, similarly, has received a variable quantity of *ch'i*. Those with much of it are extinguished slowly; those with little come to a quick end."⁴⁰

Moreover, according to Ko Hung, one's predestined life-span is normally cut down on account of the following causes: First, human beings always do something to deplete the original allotment of *ch'i*, the so-called "breath-deficiency" (*sun-ch'i*). In particular, Ko Hung stresses that one's excessive or unregulated habits would exhaust most of the allotted *ch'i*.⁴¹ Second, decrease of vital *ch'i* is caused by the sins one commits. It is believed that the gods, *ssu-k'uo chih shen*, who are in charge of human misdeeds would accordingly make deductions from one's allotted life-span. Ko Hung elaborates on this belief, writing,

The gods of heaven and earth who are in charge of misdeeds make deductions from people's reckonings (*to-suan*) according to the degree of their wrongdoing. As these reckonings decrease, a man becomes poorer and falls ill; frequently he suffers anxiety. When no more are left, he dies.⁴²

Indeed, this sort of reasoning that correlates an individual's physical health and allocated life-span with moral behavior is a common feature formulated in earlier Taoist texts during the third century. The following quotation from the *Book of the Great Peace* clearly shows this ancient Chinese conception of one's predestined life-span:

Heaven knows people's large and small wrongdoings. [Gods] will record them in the book of goodness and evil. They are examined by days and months and, in consequence, [Heaven] makes deductions from people's reckonings and cut their life-span... When one's reckoning is completely deduced, one will be put in the grave, and those uncounted deductions will go to one's offspring.⁴³

Established upon a model in which a definite give is always deducted, this understanding of the normal course of human life appears to take a pessimistic view of human destiny. Because of this subtraction from an individual's mortal life-span, Ko Hung lamented over the transience of human life. His lament, to a certain extent, echoed the ancient Hebrew poets' rhetoric of lamentation in the *Book of Ecclesiastes*, saying, "In this world man loses one day every day, and like the buffalo or sheep being led away to the slaughter, every step forward brings him nearer to departure in death."⁴⁴ So saying, Ko Hung basically believes that one's normal life-span has been predetermined based upon a definite quantity of received vital energies. One's normal course of life is essentially a fatalistic dance towards death. After determining Ko Hung's view on the nature of human life as such, the next important question is how he conceives the meanings of death, as well as the world of the afterlife.

Prior to the significant cultural influences by Indian Buddhism upon the fourth- and fifth-century Chinese conception of mortality, the ancient Chinese usually accept the idea that a person exists on earth only one time, although there were different religious and philosophical speculations over the final destiny of souls (*hun* and *p'o*) after one died.⁴⁵ For the latter, two opposite views can be instanced: Wang Ch'ung (A.D. 27-ca. 100) and the *Book of the Great Peace*.

Wang Ch'ung, a Later Han literatus, can be viewed as a representative figure of Confucian literati who deny any survival of the "souls of the dead" (*kuei*). In his great work, *Lun-heng*, he strongly argues for the view that as soon as a person dies and is buried, both the body (*hsing*) and souls (*ching* and *shen*) gradually dissolve into the primal *ch'i* and lose their individual identities. Thus, in terms of the problem of the afterlife, Wang Ch'ung absolutely denies the idea that the individual soul, as well as the body, can survive death.⁴⁶

Far from this sort of rationalist view on afterlife suggested by the Confucian literati, the *Book of the Great Peace* asserts the existence of a netherworld, *T'ai-yin* (literally, the Great Darkness),⁴⁷ wherein an individual's moral conduct during life has been recorded. The book also makes it clear that when one dies, he/she will come to the

T'ai-yin to be examined. With the exception of a small number of immortals, most of the dead remain forever in the *T'ai-yin*.

When [the gods of] "below the earth" (*ti-hsia*, another name for *T'ai-yin*) receive those new dead, the latter will be examined upon their wrongdoing and the times when they might have repented. It is based upon this examination to determine one's "register" (*ming-chi*) [in the *ti-hsia*]; and on account of the causes of their wrongdoing, the dead will be accordingly punished.⁴⁸

Moreover, regarding the fate of the dead, the *Book of the Great Peace* adds that in the *T'ai-yin* the dead are transformed into different forms of "spirits of the dead" (*kuei*), such as the "spirits of happiness" (*lo-yao kuei*), the "spirits of suffering" (*shou-k'u kuei*), the "spirits of evil" (*wu-kuei*), and so on.⁴⁹ In spite of the various forms of the "souls of the dead," the most crucial underlying assumption is that the dead are never born again.

In other words, based upon this identification of the indigenous Chinese conception of a netherworld, it is quite possible to suggest that the ancient Chinese in the period before the arrival of Buddhism generally accepted the view that after a person dies, he/she cannot be reborn on earth again. Even in the *Book of the Great Peace*, in discussions of the dead's material body, there is no explicit concept of "rebirth" (*tsai-sheng*) after dying,⁵⁰ with the exception of one implicit instance.⁵¹ Instead, the book clearly states that everyone can only live on earth for just one time:

For the matter that people in this world have to die, this is not a tiny thing. If one is dead, one can never see sky and earth, sun and moon, one's veins and bones are turned into dust. The importance of death means very much. People who are on this earth can only receive one time of life, and will not be born again [after death] (*pu-te-ch'ung-sheng*).⁵²

Although it is not my interest in this study to examine the possible conceptual continuity among Wang Ch'ung, the *Book of the Great Peace*, and Ko Hung, it is interesting to note that a similar lack of use of the religious imagination on the concept of "rebirth" (*tsai-sheng* or *fu-sheng*) is a characteristic of the *Inner Chapters* as well.⁵³

Ko Hung's belief in the existence of an "Unseen World" sets him in opposition to Wang Ch'ung's rationalistic view. The former insists

that gods, spirits, demons, and immortals inhabit the “otherworld.” To prove this argument, he cites on one occasion a “historical” example showing the reappearance of the “spirit of the dead” of a concubine of the Emperor Wu, which was summoned back by an esoteric master, Shao Weng.⁵⁴ Pointing to this “historical” instance, he argues,

These are all matters dealing with spirits (*kuei*) and gods (*shen*), documented in our books, there are many more clear expositions of this sort. So if the ignorant profane people (*su-jen*) still claim that they do not exist, how can they believe the matter of long-life.⁵⁵

In spite of this idea of the survival of the “spirits of the dead,” the basic assumption underlying Ko Hung’s discourse of *hsien*-immortality resulted from his lack of imagination concerning the theme of “rebirth” after death. His religious discourse of salvation is uniquely concerned with the ideas and methods for prolonging life (*ch’ang sheng*), avoiding the death, and attaining an eternal life as long as Heaven and Earth, rather than giving any specific thoughts on the conception of rebirth. In sum, the doctrine of the perfect state of salvation which Ko Hung is most concerned with is derived from his denial of the finitude of death and the need to strive for the attainment of long life.⁵⁶

My contention is based upon the following three pieces of internal evidence. First, beginning with a recognition that there is an absolute break between life and death, Ko Hung, in the *Inner Chapters*, makes it clear that an individual body cannot regenerate if the souls (*hun* and *p’o*) depart from its body. In his words, “When some of a man’s *hun* and *p’o* depart from the body, illness ensues; when they all leave him, a man dies.”⁵⁷ More importantly, when an individual dies, “there would be no return of the departed, and the decomposed [body] would not have a chance of rebirth.” Knowing this ironic reality of human finitude, Ko Hung further recommends that “those literati who want to know the Tao should sincerely mourn over it.”⁵⁸

Secondly, Ko Hung suggests that there is a specific class of immortals—the “immortals liberated from the corpse” (*shih-chieh-hsien*)⁵⁹—who, because of their inability to achieve immortality by immediate ascension “in full daylight” (*pai-jih sheng-t’ien*), need to transform

their material bodies after the normal rite of burial. Even so, for him, these immortals are “falsely dead” (*t'o-ssu*), or superficially take the form of dying (*t'o-chung-mang chih-hsing*).⁶⁰ In this sense, mortality and immortality, for him, are two unbridgeable categories. For instance, when confronted the contradiction in speaking the “death” of the immortals of *shih-chieh-hsien*, Ko Hung immediately adds an example of “historical” evidence to insist that the “death” is merely a “false” death. That is to say, what is put into the coffin is just a cane the immortal has given the appearance of a corpse to, while the real body has already gone to live among other immortals.⁶¹

Thirdly, if we further contrast Ko Hung’s concept of the “liberation of the corpse” with later Taoist texts from the fourth or fifth century, e.g., the *Tzu-yang chen-jen nei chuan* (*Inner Traditions of the Perfected of Tzu-yang*, HY 303), the *Teng-chen yin-chueh* (HY 421), and the *Chen-kao* (HY 1010), a great shift in the meaning of the term, “liberation from the corpse,” becomes evident. Since those latter texts had been influenced by the Buddhist doctrine of the afterlife, a new understanding of the “liberation from the corpse” emerged. For instance, in the *Chen-kao*, the immortals liberated from the corpse are ranked as the “agent-beneath-the-earth” (*ti-hsia chu-che*) in the underworld of *T'ai-yin*; and, most importantly, they now undergo a regeneration process toward the rebirth of their material bodies.⁶²

In sum, for Ko Hung, the search for a perfect state of salvation has first and foremost to assume and overcome the seemingly unchangeable fact of human corporeal mortality. Thus, he required a journey of departure which would completely free the individual from the constraints of that mortality.

Ko Hung's New Discourse on hsien-Immortality: Its Basic Characteristics

In the account that follows, I shall attempt to explicate the basic and unique characteristics of Ko Hung’s “new” discourse of *hsien-immortality*.⁶³ I shall approach the conceptual dimension of the “discontinuity” applauded in Ko Hung’s discourse on two levels. The first level concerns the distinctiveness of his discourse from the type which

was celebrated in the “Treatise on the Feng and Shen Sacrifices” (in *Shih chi*) and the “Treatise on Chiao Sacrifices” (in *Han shu*); the second level concerns the self-understanding and intentionality embodied in this new discourse of *hsien*-immortality. Both levels of analysis depend on a conception of historical dynamism that situates Ko Hung’s discourse within his social and intellectual milieu.

In consideration of the distinctive characteristics of Ko Hung’s discourse on *hsien*-immortality within the milieu of the Six Dynasties, Kominami Ichirô has argued that Ko Hung’s discourse is already stripped of imperial ideology, which, in the historiographical depictions of the emperors Ch’in Shih-huang and Han Wu-ti, adopts the cult of *hsien*-immortality to extend its worldly wealth, honor and power. Instead, an openness to all who want to learn the ascetic cult leading to *hsien*-immortality characterizes Ko Hung’s religious discourse. The following analysis of one of earliest Chinese myths of *hsien*-ship further demonstrates the difference between such two different models of *hsien*-immortality. For the ancient Chinese, the myths of the “Three Islands of Paradise” (*san-shen-shan* or *san-tao*), especially the paradise of P’eng-lai, could be said to represent the earliest cult of *hsien*-immortality. Accordingly, the myths claimed that immortals lived in far-away paradises. If a living person could reach a paradise, he or she would find the “drug that confers deathlessness” (*pu-ssu chih-yao*).⁶⁴

In addition to the surface account of the myths, it is of the greatest importance to explore the specific locality within which the myths of immortals are deployed. Imperialist desires and motivations can be linked to the search for the “drug that confers deathlessness” in the myth of the “Three Islands of Paradise.” For instance, the two “Treatises” above offer many accounts of how the First Ch’in Emperor and Emperor Han Wu-ti enthusiastically sought the mythological paradise of P’eng-lai. The best known account concerns the First Ch’in Emperor who once sent several thousand of virgin boys and girls, led by an official named Ts’ui Shih, to the East Sea to seek the paradise of P’eng-lai and to procure the “drugs that confer deathlessness.”⁶⁵ Given this account, the ancient Chinese discourse

of *hsien*-immortality therefore depends heavily upon a mythological structure of "archaic hero," as well as the human desire for a heavenly "gift" of eternal life. Further, the quests by the First Chin Emperor and Emperor Han wu-ti for a prolongation of life present the historical context within which the ancient myths of immortals were deployed. As the main idea cherished by this tradition of *hsien*-immortality, the search for the immortality of the body mainly centers upon heavenly gifts of the "drug that confers deathlessness" by transcendent immortals believably appearing in distant paradises.⁶⁶

In contrast to this imperial discourse of *hsien*-immortality, the "new" discourse expressed in Ko Hung's *Inner Chapters* basically suggests another path of salvation and perfection. That is, an individual's self-perfection is only dependent upon ascetic, mystic, and ethical behavior. Since it is a new religious discourse supposedly open to all people, the quest for a prolonged life is no longer the preserve of the wealthy and powerful. Emphasizing this difference, Ko Hung argues that "[Cultivating the cult of] *hsien*-Immortals requires only firm resolution and high sincerity... The goal can be achieved without taking account of one's talent and ability."⁶⁷ And "Once the essentials have been obtained, anyone can effect this process without waiting for any great talents of the sages and worthies to do so."⁶⁸

In insisting on the availability of this religious knowledge and path for everyone, it is not surprising to hear Ko Hung consciously claiming that the new discourse of *hsien*-immortality is outside the influence of worldly status and wealth. For him, "the secret [of cultivating the Tao for a long life] lies in will-power, not in riches or high position."⁶⁹ He even strongly states that the path seeking prolonging life and the path seeking the imperial class's power and wealth are contradictory:

Methods leading to immortals require calm, freedom of action, and obliviousness of our physical frames; but in the case of princes the bonging of huge bells and the thundering of drums with their booming and rumbling upset their souls and excite their hearts and minds.⁷⁰

Accordingly, he thus criticizes the First Ch'in Emperor and Han-wu-ti as persons who merely had a hollow reputation for seeking the

cult of *hsien*-immortality, but never realized the reality of cultivating the Tao.

The following is my further elaboration of Ko Hung's self-understanding of the cult of *hsien*-immortality and its basic characteristics in order to support my contention that Ko Hung has recreated a new discourse of *hsien*-tradition. First, in regard to the metaphysical ground supporting his claim for attaining immortality, it is of utmost importance to point out that his discourse is based upon the natural principle of "metamorphoses" (*pien-hua*), the million and one transformations.⁷¹ He considers it the secret principle underlying the mysterious dynamism of natural life. Above all, according to this principle, the phenomenal world is not regarded as a closed, final, and perpetual reality. Instead, an infinite, boundless, and endless "world" of new things and new life is acclaimed and it will arrive once the old one is exhausted and has passed away. Grounded upon this "natural" principle, the following quotation demonstrates Ko Hung's faith in the real existence of a transcendent world of immortals:

The ordinary people merely say that because they see no immortals in this profane world it is not possible that such things exist. But what is so special about what our eyes have seen? Why should there be any limit to the number of marvelous things that exist between sky and earth, within the vastness of the Unbounded? Throughout our lives we have a sky over our heads but never know what is above it; to the end of our days we live on the earth without ever knowing what is below it.⁷²

In addition to this metaphysical view with respect to the openness of this world, the beliefs in an endless "world of metamorphoses" and "new life" are further supported by the following bit of deductive reasoning. On the basis of daily experiences which demonstrate many instances of natural metamorphoses, Ko Hung deduces that other unknown phenomena of metamorphoses are also possible, above all, the human transformation into an immortal. In his words, "By comparing the slightest clues, big effects become known; on seeing what is already there, one learns to understand what has not yet been tried."⁷³ According to Sanaka Sô's count, Ko Hung cited almost thirty instances of natural metamorphosis to support this deduction.

For instance, in one instance Ko Hung writes that a "pheasant turns into a *shen* bivalve," and in another a "sparrow becomes a clam."⁷⁴ It may be added to these examples that Ko Hung's metaphysical point of departure for liberation is dependent upon a faith in the principle of metamorphoses in nature, rather than being based upon, for example, the theme of universal suffering (*sarvam duhkham*) which Indian religions have assumed to be the *conditio sine qua non* for generating the desire for emancipation. Instead, he considers the perfect state of human emancipation to be a part of the natural process of metamorphoses. Hence, the transcendent world of immortals is not derived from a mode of complete rejection or withdrawal from the cosmic circuit. His wish for salvation is not also established upon a conception of a "Perfect God." For him, the plane of salvation, transcendence, and emancipation from the bonds of the reality of death is derived from the natural horizon of an enlargement or transformation of the present, a liberation from one's present finite existence.

The second and the most important feature of Ko Hung's discourse contends that the transcendent mode of immortality is not something absolutely unobtainable and unreachable for the human. Instead, everyone can become an immortal and achieve a prolonged life. Immortals are not a special species (*hsien-jen chih wu-chung*).⁷⁵ Simply by means of one's great efforts in cultivating the proper esoteric arts, an individual can attain liberation from this worldly enslavement and enter the transcendent mode of immortality. In particular, Ko Hung claims that the transcendent mode of immortal being is not granted by someone else. That "something else exists" is not due to a distinct gift from the gods or through such religious acts as sacrifice and prayers. The cult of *hsien*-immortality, insists he, is a path of salvation accessible merely through one's own acts of learning and cultivating the proper esoteric arts. Thus, *hsien*-immortals are not some special species distinctively endowed with long life. The truth of their achieving immortality merely lies in their own resolute willingness to make the great effort required. As a result, they receive the reward of freedom to ascend to the transcendent world of immortals.

To further illustrate this central claim, Ko Hung cites the examples of the immortals P'eng Chu and Lao-tzu and argues that,

In the case of P'eng and Lao, however, we are still dealing with mere men, not with creatures of a different species. It was through attaining the Tao that they enjoy longevity, not through what they were by nature... [Human beings] possess intelligence (*jen-yao-ming-chieh*); if they can practice the same Tao as did P'eng and Lao; they can achieve the same results.⁷⁶

The immortal figure of "Lao-tzu" had been elevated long before Ko Hung to the status of the most prominent sage and was even considered a deified god before and during Ko Hung's life-time. Consequently, Ko Hung's discursive depiction of Lao-tzu as merely an ordinary man who attained the deathless immortality merely by means of his own efforts deserves a more penetrating look, especially in relation to the wider cultural significance brought by his discourse.

Concerning the deification of the philosopher Lao-tzu, Wang Ch'ung (A.D. 27-91), for example, pointed out that in his time the philosopher Lao-tzu has already been elevated as a perfected one (*chen-jen*) or an immortal (*hsien-jen*) for his having transcended the normal human world (*tu-shih*).⁷⁷ Further, by the time of late second century, according to the *Hou Han-shu*⁷⁸ and the *Lao-tzu ming*,⁷⁹ Emperor Huan (A.D. 165) and his officials were said to have held the cult of Lao-tzu, who was venerated as a heavenly god named "Lord Lao" (*lao-chun*) at the "temples (*chi*) of Lao-tzu" in the capital of Lo-yang and the state of Chan.

In addition to the trace of the cult of the deified Lao-tzu at the court, according to a Tun-huang Taoist manuscript identified as a late second century religious Taoist text, the *Stura of the Transformation of Lao-tzu* (*Lao-tzu pien-hua ching*),⁸⁰ the deified Lao-tzu had also been elevated as a personified supreme deity in popular religion of among the lowest strata of society. The Lord Lao-tzu was depicted as having undergone an unlimited number of esoteric transformations. In each transformation, he became manifest to the world and brought his people an era of peace.⁸¹

Obviously, these explanations of the deification of Lao-tzu are antagonistic to Ko Hung's discourse of *hsien*-immortality because of his

insistence that the attainment of long life results not from supreme deities but from one's own great efforts. Ko Hung's depiction of Lao-tzu as an ordinary man in quest of long life actually represents a new picture of Lao-tzu. In addition to what he has stated in the *Inner Chapters*, the *Shen-hsien chuan* (partially accepted as Ko Hung's work) also expresses this central claim about the ordinariness of Lao-tzu, saying that he was originally a person born without any divine nature. The attainment of immortality is plainly a result of his own human efforts. So, he is named "a person who has attained the Tao" (*te-tao-che*). Above all, Ko Hung in the *Shen-hsien-chuan* wrote the important reason why he absolutely denies the deification of Lao-tzu:

Those narrowed-minded Taoist adepts thought that deifying Lao-tzu might facilitate the later generations following him. However, they do not know this makes it harder to believe that the attainment of long life can be learned. Why? If you say Lao-tzu is a man who have attained the Tao, then, everyone will try hard to follow in his steps; however, saying he is a special divine species means that the attainment of long life cannot be learned.⁸²

In sum, Ko Hung's treatment of the discourse on Lao-tzu provides an exemplary instance of the "discontinuity" of his discourse with the previous *hsien*-tradition. This discontinuity is seen as well in Ko Hung's central claim that, through great effort to learn proper esoteric arts from an enlightened master (*ming-shih*), the perfect state of long life is possible and achievable for all.

What Does Ko Hung Expect: "Earth Immortals" (Ti-hsien)

In addition to the above elaborated conceptual features that constitute Ko Hung's self-understanding of the tradition of *hsien*-immortality, it is important to reiterate the associated esoteric practice and techniques, since they are the means by which the transcendent mode of immortals would be achieved. For Ko Hung, the "proper" esoteric arts through which one is able to achieve longevity are principally: (1) "sexual arts of the bedchamber" (*fang-chung*); (2) "breath circulation" (*hsing-ch'i*); (3) "guarding the One" (*shou-i*); (4) "taking plant medicine" (*fu ts'ao-mu-yao*); and (5) "making alchemical elixirs and

golds" (*chin-tan*). He further posits a classifying criterion by claiming that the supreme esoteric art lies in the making of alchemical elixirs and gold, which is the only way to transcend the normal human world (*tu-shih*) and to become *hsien*-immortals. Other inferior techniques, at the most, can only extend the life-span without achieving the transcendent mode of immortality and ascension to heaven.⁸³

These two essential features—the “conceptual system of *hsien*-ship” and “esoteric methods”—orchestrate Ko Hung’s new discourse of *hsien*-immortality. In a sense, this religious discourse can be summarized as a type of utopian thinking combined with selected esoteric arts. However, instead of discussing the truth-claims of his discourse, in what follows, I shall attempt to penetrate into the level of intentionality. I shall particularly focus on the question of what Ko Hung really seeks within the imagined religious world of immortals. In other words, I shall explore what sort of idealized identity Ko Hung seeks to develop by rendering such a imagined religious world.

There is no doubt that the imagined character of *hsien*-immortals is the most important representation in Ko Hung’s discourse of *hsien*-immortality. Hence, an analysis in depth of the dynamics constituting his conception of immortals and the ideal values Ko Hung pursues is crucial for this study.

First, one of the essential characteristics of Ko Hung’s discourse of *hsien*-immortality going beyond the preceding Taoist ones, as found in the *Book of the Great Peace* and the *Hsiang-erh chu*, is his great development of the conception of “three distinctive classes of immortals” (*san-pien-hsien*): (1) “heavenly immortals” (*t’ien-hsien*); (2) “earth immortals” (*ti-hsien*), and (3) “immortals of the liberation of the corpse” (*shih-chieh-hsien*).⁸⁴ According to Ko Hung, their main difference originates from the various paths of cultivation and methods for the achievement of the transcendent mode of immortality each employed. In his words,

Taoist adepts of the highest class (*shang-shih*) raise their bodies into the void and are then designated “heavenly immortals.” Those of the second class (*chung-shih*) resort to the famous mountains and are designated “earth immortals.” The

third class (*hsia-shih*) sloughs off the body after death and is designated "immortals of the liberation of the corpse."⁸⁵

Second, and more significant, is the fact that immortals of each class are assigned different realms of final destination and different forms of transcendent manifestation:

When a first-class processor is successful, he ascends and becomes an official in heaven; a second class one joins the others on mount *K'un-lun*; a third-class one enjoys long life in this world.⁸⁶

Herein, a distinctive variation of Ko Hung's conception of immortals is concealed. For "earth immortals" and "immortals of the liberation of the corpse," the two previously stated interrelated components that characterize the ancient Chinese conception of *hsien*-immortals—"heavenly ascension" (*sheng-t'ien*) and "deathless" (*pu-ssu*)—are cut apart. They are no longer two sides of the same coin.⁸⁷ Although this conceptual change can be traced back to an earlier period before Ko Hung's lifetime, as seen in a Han rhapsody (*fu*) composed by Ssu-ma Hsiang-ju, the "Rhapsody of Mr. Great Man" (*Ta-jen fu*),⁸⁸ the separation of these two essential components configured in the representation of *hsien*-immortals is a later development, obviously in the early Six Dynasties' Taoist literature, e.g., the *Shen-hsien chuan*, the *Chen-kao*, the *Han-wu-ti nei-chuan*.⁸⁹

Specifically in Ko Hung's context, on the one hand, the immortals of the second and third classes are likewise depicted as enjoying the complete avoidance of death similar to the "heavenly immortals." On the other hand, instead of ascending to the paradise of *T'ai-ching*,⁹⁰ "earth immortals" and "immortals of the liberation of the corpse" are only allowed to remain and to wander in famous mountains and on earth. According to this sense, they have already lost the heavenly gift: flying freely through the air, ascending from earth to heaven and descending again from heaven to earth, drinking jade juice, tasting heavenly food, and dwelling in the halls of the beautiful paradise.⁹¹ In spite of such a "loss," not enjoying heavenly ascension may not be so bad according to Ko Hung.

In consideration of the class of “heavenly immortals,” Ko Hung stipulates that they are promoted as heavenly officials after arriving in the paradise of *T'ai-ching*. Besides the *Inner Chapters*, this stipulation is seen in the *Shen-hsien chuan* as well. In the example of the immortal, Liu An, it is said that when he had ascended into heaven, he received an official title, namely, *san-hsien-jen*,⁹² and the immortal Lu Lü-sheng was said to have been assigned the heavenly official title of *san-t'ien-t'ai-shang-ssu-kuan*.⁹³ Inferring from this allocation of heavenly official positions, Ko Hung deduced that the heavenly world has a hierarchical organization. In other words, in place of a general belief in an ideal community in heaven, such as the harmonious communal group described in the poem “The Peach Blossom Spring,” composed by T'ao Ch'ien (A.D. 365-427), an official institution in the paradise of *T'ai-ch'ing* similar to this worldly bureaucracy is mapped out. As a rhetorical device, Ko Hung quotes the following by the immortal P'eng Chu to support his claim that hierarchical ranking and discrimination among immortals themselves are likely to happen in the heavenly world:

Old P'eng claimed that in heaven there were so many important gods holding offices of higher honor that the newer immortals must hold the meaner positions. They must perform all sorts of services, and their lot is harder than before.⁹⁴

In order to flee from such a heavenly bureaucratic situation, the immortal P'eng Chu is quoted as preferring to remain on earth for more than eight hundred years, rather than immediately ascending to paradise. According to another example in the *Shen-hsien chuan*, the immortal Mr. Pai-shih reached a similar conclusion and preferred to stay on earth rather than join the hierarchical structure in heaven. The *Shen-hsien chuan* also describes how he did not cultivate the specific kind of esoteric methods that would enable him to ascend to heaven. Rather, he was simply satisfied with the achieved state of having become an “earth immortal” because he believed that a complete avoidance of death had been fulfilled.⁹⁵

With such stipulations, Ko Hung's teachings clearly bring about a very significant conceptual change from the tradition of *hsien*-immortality. Not surprisingly, there are idiosyncratic agenda and

intentions hinted at therein. If the imagined heavenly world operates like what this worldly bureaucratic system does, and if it is also known that it is such a bureaucracy that the recluse literati of the Six Dynasties, like Ko Hung, sought to flee from, then it should come as no surprise to hear him proclaim that "he saw no point in hurrying to go to heaven... if another more essential eternal element—prolonged life—could have been achieved."⁹⁶ Such a claim certainly means that, for Ko Hung, the primary objective of prolonging life takes priority over ascending to the heavenly world. In support of his belief, Ko Kung quotes his master Cheng's teaching to the effect that "long life" is the supreme goal of the cult of *hsien*-immortality:

Some immortals may mount to heaven and others remain here on earth. What matters is that they all have achieved long life; they simply make their abodes wherever they prefer.⁹⁷

Therefore, as many modern scholars have already pointed out, in displaying his desired goal, Ko Hung's new discourse of *hsien*-immortality does not urge the individuals to become "heavenly immortals" but "earth immortals."⁹⁸ Ko Hung' discourse primarily lies in privileging a temporal sense of eternity and an avoidance of death; whereas the spacial sense of ascending to heaven, flying and going upwards and downwards through the air, seems secondary.

An Alternate Ideal Self Identity: Earth Immortals (ti-hsien) vs. Confucian Sages (sheng-jen)

To some modern scholars of ancient Chinese religion, Ko Hung's type of quest for a prolonged material life, crystallized in the ideal image of the "earth immortal," is often discussed as a manifestation of the human inclination to enjoy and to extend this world's pleasure as long as possible.⁹⁹ Other scholars, such as Joseph Needham, tend to categorize this Taoist belief in material immortality under the rubric of the distinctiveness of the "Chinese" character, namely, the so-called "this-worldly orientation" in contrast to an "other-worldly salvation."¹⁰⁰ These two foundational and yet complementary views assume a "genealogical" or "universal" structure for explaining recursive cultural phenomenon. However, the problem of identifying a

diachronic structure in this way is that it does not fully meet the need for a dynamic formulation of how and why evolving practices and recursive appropriations are developed: one that defines practices as Taoist vis-a-vis the other cultural options of the day.

In place of that sort of genealogical method, in what follows I would like to locate Ko Hung's discourse of *hsien*-immortality within the context of his idiosyncratic concerns. Out of this methodical approach, the discursive meaning embedded in that cultural configuration of the celebration of the procurement of deathlessness and material immortality can be more clearly illuminated.

Ko Hung's description of the required ascetic methods in cultivating the cult of *hsien*-immortality and his assertion that worldly values and the ideal world of immortality are incommensurable lead me to believe that it is unconvincing to consider his discourse as simply a reflection of the human inclination to seek a "maximum degree of enjoying this world's pleasure in the future."¹⁰¹ Although Ko Hung's discourse of *hsien*-immortality fixes upon the image of the "earth immortal" and takes the perfect state of salvation as simply a continuity of material life in this world for hundreds of years, these celebrated ideals are not necessarily caused by the above-mentioned "psychological" factors.¹⁰² In particular, by emphasizing his readiness and steadiness in the cultivation of the *hsien*-immortality cult, Ko Hung clearly declares that his future life-orientation must be against this world's values and glories, saying:

I have broken all contact with my native village and quit the glories of our present world, because I felt obliged to go afar and ascend a famous mountain to finish my philosophical essays, and afterward to prepare the immortal medicine with a view to enjoying long life (*ch'ang-sheng*). Every member of the profane is amazed... [and they] consider me mad. The process of the Tao, however, does not flourish in the midst of mundane activities. If such human activity is not abandoned, how can an aspiration (*chih*) such as mine be cultivated?¹⁰³

To verify Ko Hung's determination to commit himself to an ascetic life and to deny all of this worldly honors and values, a further detailed biographical study of his life is required. However, the prerequisite of withdrawing from social ties is stressed in Ko Hung's

discourse of *hsien*-immortality. Hence, the general "psychological" account cannot help explain the depth of meaning and complexity underlying Ko Hung's religious discourse. Furthermore, it is also unconvincing to believe that a person would opt for a solitary life and to cultivate ascetic arts because of promises of material pleasure in the future.

If the issue is not solved by this simplistic and general explanation, then the crucial question remains: what kind of idiosyncratic concern could motivate a literatus like Ko Hung to argue "obsessively" for a possible realization of immortality and complete avoidance of death? What would compel him to devote himself so completely to the cultivation of a religious ideal of *hsien*-immortality?

It is my contention that Ko Hung's religious themes of long life and the complete avoidance of death bypass a biological or material sense and, instead, engage in a cultural or symbolic level of meaning. To borrow Clifford Geertz's formulation, the symbolic meanings of deathlessness and *hsien*-immortality not only are models "for" Six Dynasties literati's lives but also models "of" them.¹⁰⁴ That is, the symbolic world of *hsien*-immortality provides an individual ideal that may look fantastic and literally impossible, yet, the symbolic *hsien*-images are no less useful and constructive in giving meanings to Ko Hung's life struggle and in forming his personal ideal identity. For Ko Hung, the ideal of prolonging life crystallized in the image of "earth immortal" marks a genuine alternative value and vision of life, which is in contrast to the other existing options in his time, such as Confucian sages, those in power, philosophers, or virtuous persons. The symbol of the *hsien*-immortal, by carrying a resolution of the struggle for overcoming the impasse of the transience of human life,¹⁰⁵ points to a "higher" representation of an ideal identity. Not only that, this symbol of ideal identity also functions as an individual's re-constructed psycho-social core, giving an inner coherence to the individual's unified senses of continuity in time and mastery of social experiences, regardless of the fact that human beings are always in states of discontent and unfulfillment.

According to Ko Hung, the *hsien*-immortals who can achieve the complete avoidance of death rarely come from the social groups of worthies, emperors, or sages. Hence, he implies that *hsien*-immortality are distinctive “human” ideal values to be pursued and potentially achieved by anyone. In the first, in order to differentiate the ideal values of *hsien*-immortal from this worldly worthies and powers, Ko Hung says, “Those who attained immortal were almost all poor and lowly. They were not men of position and power.”¹⁰⁶ Second, in placing the ideal of *hsien*-immortality out of the reach of imperial figures, Ko Hung rebukes emperors such as the First Emperor of the Ch'in and Emperor Han-wu-ti, who were “models” of seeking for immortality in ancient Chinese history and literature, by saying, “These two emperors had a hollow reputation for wanting immortality, but they never experienced the reality of cultivating the Tao.”¹⁰⁷ Considering his conscious attempt to deny any imperial privilege away from the discourse of *hsien*-immortality, we may conclude that, for Ko Hung, there is an incommensurability between the value system informing the cult of the *hsien*-immortals and the imperial system.

Perhaps, Ko Hung's most important claim in constructing the *hsien*-immortals as an ideal identity with respect to Six Dynasties literati's concern lies in his assertion that the *hsien*-immortal is the opposite of the “Confucian sage.” Ko Hung deploys two strategies in arguing this.

First, he unprecedently claims that “A [Confucian] sage does not necessarily become an *hsien*-immortal, just as a *hsien*-immortal does not necessarily become a sage.”¹⁰⁸ Thus, he presents these as distinct models “of” the literati's life. Moreover, each ideal personal identity requires different paths of cultivation. Specifically for the cult of *hsien*-immortality, the values of long life and deathlessness, which were never properly addressed in Confucian discourse, are to be cultivated; *hsien*-immortals are represented as an alternate model of ideal human quality. In comparing this Taoist ideal type with Confucian sages, Ko Hung argues that the latter were poor in the art of cultivating long life. Thus, they could only be regarded as ordinary persons without any special ontological status and quality:

When [Confucian] sages do not eat, they get hungry; when they do not drink, they get thirsty... After many years they grow old; when harmed they become ill. When their breaths are exhausted, they die. This means that there are many things in which they do not differ from people in general, even though there are a few things in which they do differ from others.¹⁰⁹

In depreciating the Confucian model, for him, even the two most revered Confucian sages, the Duke of Chou and Confucius, are labelled as having been unable and improbable to achieve the ideal state of *hsien*-immortality, since they had not devoted themselves to the particular religious path of the cultivation of the esoteric arts for prolonging life.¹¹⁰

In addition to constructing the pursuit of *hsien*-immortality as an autonomous path cultivating an idealized personal identity which is competitive with the Confucian idealized sages, Ko Hung also takes a bold step to relativize further the then unchallenged and sacred status of Confucian sages by claiming that they simply represent "a" type of sage in regard to the art of government. In this way, he implies that there could have various ideal types of "sages" with respect to their corresponding cultural activities. In his words, if "sage" is only a "designation for an outstanding person in any human endeavor," then, for instance, "the Yellow Emperor and Lao Tan" were "[both] sages in the art of attaining the Tao," and there are also "sages of painting," "sages of singing," "sages of military," and so on.¹¹¹ What perhaps Ko Hung actually means is that within his discourse of *hsien*-immortality, the "earth immortal," for example, is an ideal "sage" comparable to the Confucian model of the sage. Hence, the idealized personal identity with which he identifies could no longer be bounded by the traditional Confucian model. The Taoist "sage" pursues the attainment of long life and overcoming the bonds of death by cultivating the esoteric cult of *hsien*-immortality.

Conclusion

To conclude this lengthy discussion of Ko Hung's "new" discourse concerning *hsien*-immortality, it is my contention that Ko Hung's construction of the idealized character of *hsien*-immortals is essentially

a representation and a product of an intellectual attempt sought by a particular social class of literati. To trace the unique cultural significance of such attempt, perhaps, it needs to consider the different ultimate concerns posed by Confucianism and Taoism. As seen from the analytical framework of modern sociology, classifying two different realms and focuses of human existence: collective and individual, undoubtedly, Ko Hung's religious discourse is certain to celebrate the individual rather than the collective. His idealized "sage" is no longer satisfied with the Confucian claim giving primacy to collective obligations and social relationships. In shaking off these bonds, Ko Hung says that Taoist sages or immortals pursue a higher goal in the alternative context of individuality and eternity. Essential to their interest is the root and ground of their own subjective being and the quest for a transcendent self-identity, all of which the Han idealized Confucian sage would not touch upon. On account of this shift of cultural concern, Ko Hung's discourse of *hsien*-immortality intentionally begins with a suspension of the consideration of collective and social life. From that suspension, what he tries to disclose as the eternal "value" of human life is found in the horizon of seeking the ultimate ground of one's own destiny, which has first and foremost meant overcoming the bonds of death and the attainment of long life. Based upon the imagined symbolic world of *hsien*-immortality, he therefore formed for himself a new idealized personal identity. Above all, he stresses that it is through the great efforts and proper esoteric methods that everyone can transcend the fate of death and attain a higher level of human existence.

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¹ Ko Hung, *Pao-p'u tzu nei-p'ien* (hereafter *PPTNP*), in Wang Ming edition, *Pao-p'u tzu nei-pien chiao-shih* (Beijing: Chung hua shu chu, 1982), 2: 3b; 10: 6b.

² This accords with A.C. Graham's study on the date of the "Seven Inner Chapters" of the *Chuang-tzu*, see his *Chuang-tzu: The Seven Inner Chapters and Other Writings from the Book of Chuang-tzu* (London: Allan & Unwin, 1981), 3.

³ The word "hsien-jen" (immortal) is not found in the *Chuang-tzu*, but the other similar words like "shen-jen" (divine man) and "chen-jen" (perfected man) are used in the book to describe a similar state of *hsien*-transcendence. It is thus possible to conclude that "shen-jen" actually refers to the ideal character of divine immortals (*shen-hsien*). Moreover, the book's description of "shen-jen" that "he does not eat the five grains" belongs to a kind of Taoist technique for attaining immortality. Further, the *Lieh-tzu* ("Huang-ti pien") says that "hsien-sheng" (immortals) will serve the "shen-jen" (divine man) who accordingly lives in the Ku-yi mountain.

⁴ *Chuang-tzu*, Ch. 1. The translation is that of A.C. Graham, 46.

⁵ In contrast to Chinese conception of the immortality of the body, in classical Western tradition—Greek and Hellenistic—there was generally a belief in a magical flight for the separable soul, leaving the physical bodies and entailing a heavenly journey. See Ioan P. Culiano, "Ascension," *Death, After Life, and the Soul*, Lawrence E. Sullivan, ed. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1989), 107–116.

⁶ For such a definition of ancient Chinese conception of immortality, see Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China* (hereafter *SCC*), Vol. 5, pt. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 94.

⁷ *Shou-wen chieh-tzu* (Beijing: Chung-hua shu-chu, 1963), 167.

⁸ See David Hawkes, *The Songs of the South: An Anthology of Ancient Chinese Poems by Qu Yuan and Other Poets* (New York: Penguin Books Ltd, 1985), 191–199.

⁹ According to Tsuda Saukichi, "Shinsen-shisō no kenkyū" (Studies on the Immortals), in *Tsuda Saukichi zenshu* (Tokyo, 1939), 172–333, these two features of the ancient Chinese doctrine of immortality possibly originated from different and initially separate traditions.

¹⁰ Though we assume deathlessness as an ideal state of immortality for ancient Chinese in the second century B.C., Anna Seidel, "Tokens of Immortality in Han Graves," *Numen* 29 (1982), 79–122, gives us a more complicated and challenging picture that shows a gap between the theoretical construct of the ancient Chinese ideal of deathless immortality and the archaeological findings of the buried from the replicas of Han tombs, e.g., funerary banners and bronze-mirrors. In particular, she finds that there were arts depicting the dead who progress from death to heaven. Moreover, some bronze mirrors and banners found in the Han tombs present the contemporary longing for an afterlife through dying and then arriving in the paradise after staying in the tomb. Seidel adds that the ancient Chinese concept of immortality may not only restrict to one ideal mode, which bypasses the state of death.

¹¹ Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (New York: Harvest/HBJ Books, 1985), 193.

¹² Ibid., 205.

¹³ There is still a prevalent and slightly dogmatic view held by most modern Chinese scholars arguing that Ko Hung's concept of immortality is due to a false and superstitious worldview. Wang-ming, for example, is best known to deny this part of Ko Hung's thought by saying, "[He] unceasingly propagated the deathless of immortals, the possibility of learning the way of attaining immortality, [but]... such matters are absolutely absurd, ridiculous, and false," in Wang Ming, *Pao-p'u tzu nei-pien chiao-shih*, 6. See also Ch'ing Hsi-t'ai, ed., *The History of Chinese Taoism*, Vol. 1 (Szechuan, 1988), 309.

¹⁴ The term "Medieval China" is frequently adopted both by Japanese and Western sinologists, for example, see Kawakatsu Yoshio et al., *Chūgoku chūseiishi kenkyū* (A Study of the History of Medieval China) (Tokyo: Tokai Daigaku Shuppankai, 1970); and Albert E. Dien, ed., *State and Society in Early Medieval China* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1990).

¹⁵ For the summary of this view that the period of medieval China was ruled by hereditary aristocracy, see Deenish Grafflin, "The Great Family in Medieval South China," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies (HJAS)* 49 (1981), 65-74, esp. 65-66. See also, Albert E. Dien, "Introduction" in *State and Society in Early Medieval China*, 1-5.

¹⁶ Li Zehou, *The Path of Beauty: A Study of Chinese Aesthetics*, trans. Gong Lizeng (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1994), 82.

¹⁷ Michael Loewe, "The Religious and Intellectual Background," in *Cambridge History of China, Vol. 1: The Chin and Han Empires, 221 B.C.-A.D.220*, 655.

¹⁸ *Han shu* (hereafter HS) (Beijing: Chung Hua Shu chu, 1962), Ch. 22, 1027. The translation is that of Richard B. Mather, "The Controversy Over Continuity and Naturalness During the Six Dynasties," *History of Religions (HR)* 9 (1969/70), 162.

¹⁹ Here, I do not intend to simplify the four centuries history under the Han empire in terms of stagnation. In fact, Michael Loewe, "The Religious and Intellectual Background," 649-725, has properly conceived that during the Han period, a "continuously evolving process of intellectual growth in which new ideas were suggested." However, the point I want to make clear is that when we compare the Six Dynasties with the Han there was a clearly cultural paradigm change with respect to the intellectual's pursuit of Confucian value system: Confucian ethics and values were no longer a single dominant force in the life and society of the Six dynasties.

²⁰ *Hou Han shu* (hereafter HHS) (Beijing: Chung hua shu chu, 1965), Ch. 35, 1211, tells a story about a highly esteemed Confucian scholar, Cheng-hsuan (A.D. 127-200). He was learned in both the ancient text (*ku-wen*) and the modern text (*chin-wen*) of the classics. Accordingly, since Cheng was a Confucian scholar, when he met Yuan Sao, the then great general and the latter's advisors (*ping-k'e*), Yuan's

ping-k'e did not appreciate Cheng-husan as a *t'ung-jen* and, instead, challenged him with many questions which had nothing with the Classics.

²¹ For instance, Wang Chung (A.D. 27-c.100) refuted an existence of an independent and transcendent realm. See his *Lun-heng* (*Carefully Weighed Arguments*), especially, the chapter of "Tao-shu pien" (the False of the Tao). However, despite the Confucian literati's refusal to admit the existence of spirits and gods, it does not mean that none of the discussion and bibliography belonging to demonographic genre were recorded. The recent recovered demonographic text from a third century B.C. tomb at Shui-hu-ti, Hupei, demonstrates another side of the tale which is often officially unaddressed. For an introductory study of demonographic texts recovered at Shui-hu-ti, see Donald Harper, "A Chinese Demonography of the Third Century B.C.," *HJAS* 45 (1985), 459-498.

²² Yu Ying-shih considers the Wei-Chin period as the period of "the discovery of the individual," see his "Individualism and the Neo-Taoist Movement," in *Individualism and Holism: Studies in Confucian and Taoist Values*, Donald Munro, ed. (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan, Center For Chinese Studies, 1985), 121-155.

²³ *Shih-shuo hsin-yü*, 23: 11, in *Shih shuo hsin yü chiao chien*, by Hsu chen-o (Beijing: Chung-hua shu chu, 1984).

²⁴ Concerning the political background of Hsi K'ang's and Juan Chi's criticisms of Confucian value-system, many scholarly labor have been done. For instance, see Donald Holzman, *Poetry and Politics: The Life and Works of Juan Chi* (A.D. 210-263) (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976); Robert G. Henricks, *Philosophy and Argumentation in Third-century China: The Essays of Hsi K'ang* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1981), esp. "Introduction;" and T'ang Ch'ang-ju, *Wei Chin nan-pei ch'ao shih lung-ts'ung* (Peking: San-lien shu tien, 1955), 323-332.

²⁵ Hsi K'ang, "A Refutation of Chang Miao's Essay—People Naturally Delight in Learning." The translation is that of Robert G. Henricks, *Philosophy and Argumentation in Third-century China: The Essays of Hsi K'ang*, 140.

²⁶ Fukunaga Mitsuji, "Kei Ko ni okeru jiga no monda: Kei Ko no seikatsu to shisō," *Tōhō gakuhō* 32 (1962), 1-68.

²⁷ *Chin Shu* (hereafter CB) (Beijing: Chung hua shu chu, 1974), Ch. 14, 414.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid., Ch. 98. According to Yang Lien-sheng, "Notes on the Economic History of the Chin Dynasty," *HJAS* 9 (1945), 126: "This statement may have been an exaggeration... nevertheless the emphasis put by contemporaries on the population problem is significant."

³⁰ Ibid., Ch. 26 ("Shin-ke-chih"). The translation is that of Yang Lien-sheng, "Notes on the Economic History of the Chin Dynasty," 181.

³¹ For a study of Wang Hsi-chih's various sentimental inclinations, see Fukunaga Mitsuji's "O Gishi no shisō to seikatsu" (Wang Hsi-chih's Life and Thought), in *Dōkyō shisō shi kenkyū* (Tokyo, 1987), 319-354.

³² Ibid., 332.

³³ *Fa-shu yao-lu*, Ch. 10, in *Hsüeh chin t'ao yüan*, t'ao 21.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Hsi K'ang, *Eighteen Poems Presented to Hsi Hsi on His Entry into the Army*.

The translation is that of Peter Rushton, "An Interpretation of Hsi K'ang's Eighteen Poems Presented to Hsi Hsi on His Entry into the Army," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 99 (1979), 186.

³⁶ Ibid., 180.

³⁷ For instance, *T'ai-ping ching* (hereafter *TPC*) states that "Thousands of living begin with Primordial Breath" (in Wang Ming's edition, *T'ai-p'ing ching ho chiao*, (Beijing: Chung Hua Shu chu, 1960), 254), that "The Primordial Breath encloses Heaven, Earth, and the eight points of the compass, by which all these produce" (78), and that "Heaven, Earth, and Man originate from the same Primordial Breath, but were then divided into three entities" (236).

³⁸ *PPTNP*, 5: b.

³⁹ See *Lung-heng*, Ch. 18 and *TPC*, Ch. 36, 40.

⁴⁰ *PPTNP*, 13: 2a (James R. Ware, *Alchemy, Medicine, Religion in the China of A.D. 320: The Nei P'ien of Ko Hung (Pao-p'u tzu)*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1966), 214.

⁴¹ Ibid., 13: 7b. Ko Hung illustrates the habits of daily life that deplete one's internal ch'i as follows: "Wounding occurs when our thought is troubled with things for which we lack talent, also when we force ourselves to do lifting without the requisite strength. Sadness, decrepitude, uneasiness, and torment are wounds, as is also excessive joy..." In sum, any form of emotional, physical, and physiological strain would cause one's "breath deficiency."

⁴² Ibid., 6: 4b (Ware, 115).

⁴³ *TPC*, Ch. 110, in *T'ai-p'ing ching ho-chiao*, 526.

⁴⁴ *PPTNP*, 14: 2b (Ware, 228).

⁴⁵ For the discussion of pre-Buddhist Chinese conception of life in relation to Ko Hung's thought, see Shimomi Takao, "Hôbokushi ni okeru itsumin to sennin," *Tôhô shûkyô* 29 (1967), 35-52, esp. 42; Tsuzuki Akiko, "Rikuchô jidai ni okeru to 'Ie': Rikuchô dôkyô keiten wo toshite" (Individual and Family of the Six Dynasties: Through the Taoist Scriptures), *Nagoya daigaku tôyôshi kenkyû hokoku* 14 (1989), 19-49, esp. 22-25; and Kominami Ichirô, "Dôkyô shinko to shisha no kyusai" (The Beliefs of Taoism and the Salvation of the Dead), *Tôyôgasu kenkyû* 27 (1988), 74-107. For a general discussion of the ancient Chinese conception of the fate of souls (*hun* and *p'o*) afterlife, see Yu Ying-shih, "Life and immortality in the mind of Han China," *HJAS* 25 (1964-65), 80-121 and "'O Soul, Come Back!' A Study in the Changing Conceptions of the Soul and Afterlife in Pre-Buddhist China," *HJAS* 47 (1987), 363-395.

⁴⁶ *Lun-heng*, Ch. 26 ("Lun-ssu p'ien").

⁴⁷ The conception of *T'ai-yin* in the *TPC* supports the view that an indigenous Chinese idea of an "underworld" was not directly caused by the advent of Buddhism in China. See Anna Seidel, "Chinese Concepts of the Soul and the Afterlife," in *Death, Afterlife, and the Soul*, Lawrence E. Sullivan, ed. (New York: Macmillian, 1987), 183-188.

⁴⁸ *TPC*, Ch. 40 (In *T'ai-p'ing ching ho-chiao*, 72).

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 73.

⁵⁰ By comparing the concept of "rebirth" with the later Taoist texts, Mugitani Kunio, "Rôshi-Sojichu ni tsuite" (The Hsiang-erh Commentary on the Lao-tzu), *Tôhô gakuhô* 57 (1982), 94-95, has clearly asserted this concluding remark in regard to the *T'ai-p'ing ching*.

⁵¹ *TPC* has only one quotation on the concept of "deliverance from the corpse" (*shih-chieh*) in relation to the theme of "rebirth" (*fu-sheng*) (Ch. 72, 298), that is, "the deliverance from the corpse" which means "one is reborn afterlife" (*ssu-erh-fu-sherg*). Even so, such a state of "death" only means a "false death" (*cha-ssu*).

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ In contrast to the *PPTNP*, many popular stories concerning the "rebirth" of physical body flourished in late Six Dynasties' literature, but were compiled later than Ko Hung's life-time, e.g., the *Fa-yuan chu-lin*, Ch. 75 (collected in *Taisho Tripitaka*, Vol. 53); the *Sou-shen chi*, Ch. 16; and the *Hsü-sou-shen chi*, Ch. 4.

⁵⁴ *PPTNP*, 2: 9b.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 2: 10b (Ware, 50).

⁵⁶ For this basic conceptual assumption underlying Ko Hung's discourse, see Tsuzuki Akiko, "Rikuchô jidai ni okeru to 'Ie'—Rikuchô dôkyô keiten wo toshite," 22-24.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 2: 9b (Ware, 49).

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 5: 1b.

⁵⁹ Ko Hung explains the concept of "liberation of the corpse" by saying, "the one who sloughs off the body after death is designated as an immortal of 'liberation from the corpse' (*shih-chieh-hsien*)," cf. *PPTNP*, 2: 9a. For a detailed discussion of the Taoist conception of "liberation of the corpse" (*shih-chieh*), see Isabelle Robinet, "Metamorphosis and Deliverance From the Corpse in Taoism," *HR* 19 (1979), 37-70, esp. 57-66; Henri Maspero, *Taoism and Chinese Religion*, trans. Frank A. Kierman (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1981), 266-268; Miyakawa Hisayuki, "Dôkyô no shinsen kannen no ichi kosatsu: Shikaisen ni tsuite" (A Study of the Concept of the Immortals in Taoism with Special Reference to the Immortals Liberated from the Corpse), in Miyakawa Hisayuki, *Rikuchô shi kenkyû: Shûkyôhen* (Kyoto, 1964), 439-458.

⁶⁰ *PPTNP* 2: 9a; 12: 6a.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 2: 9a.

⁶² For that concept of rebirth in the *t'ai-yin*, see *Chen-kao* (HY 1010), Ch. 4 & 6. For the moral significance of this shift of understanding the concept of the "liberation of the corpse" in the Six Dynasties' society, see Tsuzuki Akiko, "Nanjin kanmon, kanjin no ronri isha ni tsuite" (The Moral Consciousness of the Southern Commoners in the Eastern Chin Period: Through Scriptures of Shang-ch'ing), *Tôhô shûkyô* 78 (1991), 19-50.

⁶³ Kominami Ichirô, "Shinsen den"—Hsin-shinsen-shisô," 145-236, has rightly argued that Ko Hung's discourse should be analyzed as a "new" one.

⁶⁴ For a detailed study of the myth of island of P'eng-lai in relation to the quest for the "drug that confers deathlessness," see Fukunaga Mitsuji, "Hozen setsu no keisei" (The Formation of the Theory of the Feng and Shan Sacrifices in Ch'in and Han Times), in *Dôkyô shisôshi kenkyû* (Tokyo, 1987), 233-238.

⁶⁵ *Shih-chi*, Ch. 6 ("Biography of the First Ch'in Emperor").

⁶⁶ In the *Lu-shih ch'un-chiu*, "Shen hsing lun ch'u jen pien;" the *Huai-nan-tzu*, "Sui-hsing-pien;" and the *Shan-hai ching*'s "Hai-wai-nan-ching," all state an ancient Chinese belief that in the far distant land, there lived "people who were deathless" (*pu-ssu chih-min*) and existed "countries which had no death" (*pu-ssu chih kuo*).

⁶⁷ *PPTNP*, 12: 1b.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 16: 7a.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 2: 6a.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 2: 7a.

⁷¹ For a discussion of the theme of *pien-hua* in the Taoist tradition, see Isabelle Robinet, "Metamorphosis and Deliverance From the Corpse in Taoism," *HR* 19 (1979), 37-71, esp. 37-48. And for the philological study of the word *pien-hua* in the ancient Chinese philosophy, see Nathan Sivin, "Change and Continuity in Early Cosmology: The Great Commentary to the Book of Changes," in *Chûgoku kodai kagaku-shi-ron*, Yamada Keiji and Tanaka Tan, eds. (Kyoto, 1991), 3-41.

⁷² *PPTNP*, 2: 3b.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 7: 5b.

⁷⁴ Sanaka Sô, *Sengoku. Sôsho kan no shihkô to gjutsu no kankei* (Studies relating [Taoist] Beliefs and Teachings from the Warring States Period to the Early Sung [10th cent.]) (Tokyo, 1975), 172.

⁷⁵ *PPTNP*, 5: 1a.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 3: 1a.

⁷⁷ *Lun-heng*, Ch. 7 ("Tao-hsu-pien").

⁷⁸ *HHS*, Ch. 7 ("Huan-ti-chi").

⁷⁹ *Lao-tzu ming*, in Hung Kua, *Li-shih* 3: 1a-4b.

⁸⁰ For the study of the *Lao-tzu pien-hua ching*, see Yoshioka Yoshitoyo, *Dôkyô to Bukkyô*, Vol. 1 (Tokyo, 1959), 2-15; and A. Seidel, "The Image of the Perfect Ruler in Early Taoist Messianism: Lao-Tzu and Li Hung," *HR* 9 (1969-70), 222-225.

⁸¹ A. Seidel, op. cit., 223.

⁸² *Shen-hsien chuan*, Ch. 2.

⁸³ *PPTNP*, 4: 1a; 5: 6a; 13: 5b. For a detailed analysis of these esoteric arts, see Ch. 2.

⁸⁴ In neither the *Scripture of the Great Peace* nor the *Hsiang-erh Commentary on the Lao-tzu* does the concept of the "three classes of immortals" appear. Max Kaltenmark, "The Ideology of the *T'ai-p'ing ching*," 31, notes that in the Ch. 71 of the book (in *T'ai-p'ing ching ho chiao*, 289) there are nine human categories to be distinguished. However, the category of "immortals" (*hsien-jen*) is only listed as a single category without further differentiation. Li Feng-muo agrees with this point and states that the conception of three classes of immortals is not so clearly developed in the *Book of the Great Peace*. The same thing is also seen in the *Lao-tzu hsing-erh chu*. Therein, a single entity of immortal named *hsien-shih* is found; cf. Jao Tsung-i, *Lao-tzu hsiang-erh chu chiao-ch'eng*, 57-58. For the detailed analysis of the origin and development of the Taoist conception of three classes of immortals, see Li Feng-mao, "Shen-hsien san-p'in shuo te yuan-shih chi ch'i yen-pien—I Liu-ch'ao Tao-chiao wei chung-hsin te k'ao-ch'u," in *Han-hsüeh lun-wen chi*, Vol. 2 (Taipei, 1983), 171-223.

⁸⁵ *PPTNP*, 2: 9a.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 4: 7b.

⁸⁷ It is noted that such variation took place since the later Han. For instance, in Wang Ch'ung's *Lun-heng*, the ancient Chinese character for *hsien* has been changed from 仙 to 山. The literal meaning of the later graph depicts a man on a mountain. According to the Later Han dynasty etymological dictionary, Lau Hsi's *Shih-ming*, it is said "to reach old age and not die is called 山, the word also means 'to move,' that is, to move into the mountains, therefore, the graph is made with two elements, both man (*jen*) and mountain (*shan*)."

⁸⁸ *Shih-chi*, Ch. 117 ("Biography of Ssu-ma Hsiang-ju").

⁸⁹ Tsuda Saukichi, "Shinsen-shisō no kenkyū," 181, 270. There is also an example in the *Han Wu-ti nei-chuan* (HY 292), saying, the Queen Mother of the West rebukes Emperor Wu "How can [you] become the true immortal (*chen-hsien*)... [and] if [you] diligently cultivate [these arts], [you] can transcend to the state of deathlessness" (emphasis mine).

⁹⁰ *PPTNP*, 11: 14b.

⁹¹ Ibid., 2: 4a; 3: 7a; 10: 6b.

⁹² *Shen-hsien chuan*, Ch. 4.

⁹³ Ibid., Ch. 10.

⁹⁴ *PPTNP*, 3: 8a.

⁹⁵ *Shen-hsien chuan*, Ch. 2.

⁹⁶ *PPTNP*, 3: 7b.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 3: 7b.

⁹⁸ Cf. Mugitani Kunio, "Skoki dôkyô ni okeru kyusai shisô," *Tôkyô bunka* 57 (1977), 19-63, esp. 36; Kominami Ichirô, "'Shinsenden'—Hsinshisen shisô," 205-210; and Ôfuchi Ninji, *Shoki no dôkyô: Dôkyôshi no kenkyû sono ichi*, 199.

⁹⁹ Tsuda Saukichi, "Shinsen-shisô no kenkyû," 274-278, 318; Kominami Ichirô, *Chûgoku no shinwa to monogatari*, 205-209.

¹⁰⁰ J. Needham, *SCC*, Vol. 5, pt. 2, 77-113.

¹⁰¹ Tsuda Saukichi, "Shinsen shisô no kenkyû," 172.

¹⁰² According to *PPTNP* 3: 7b, Ko Hung quotes the master Cheng's saying why immortals like P'eng does not opt for being a "heavenly immortal," saying that "To put it plainly, those who seek long life merely do not wish to relinquish the objects of their current desires." Despite that, it is my contention that such a statement does not sufficiently explain the motivational structure of Ko Hung's discourse of *hsien*-immorality.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 4: 17b.

¹⁰⁴ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1973), 93.

¹⁰⁵ For the issue of the transience of human life as the cultural problem of the Six Dynasties, see my discussion in the early part of this paper.

¹⁰⁶ *PPTNP*, 2: 8a.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 2: 7b.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 12: 1a.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 12: 4b.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 12: 4a. Besides that reason, Ko Hung also appeals to a principle of determinism that the Duke of Chou and Confucius were not destined to attain long life. Here, an apparent inconsistency occurs in regard to his previous claim that the *hsien* immortals are not special species predetermined but created through their great efforts to learn.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 12: 2a-b.

BOOK REVIEWS

FRANK WHALING (Ed.), *Theory and Method in Religious Studies. Contemporary Approaches to the Study of Religion*—Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter 1995 (427 p.) ISBN 3-11-014254-6 (pbk.) DM 68.00.

Whaling's two-volume anthology on contemporary approaches to the study of religion was first published in 1984/1985. The new edition promised to re-state and update developments in the study of religion during the second half of the twentieth century. In spite of very limited updating, the anthology is still a useful and insightful survey of the methods employed and the sub-disciplines that dominate the study of religion. One is introduced to the debates and issues raised in psychology, sociology, anthropology and science of religion. The scope of the chapters is vast, and it is not possible to deal with each and every issue raised in the book. There are a number of insightful contributions like the impact of the definitions of religion on analyzing religions in practice (Kehler and Hardin); the peculiarity of religious phenomena (Smart); the Western bias of the study of religion (Oosten); and the particular functions of religious systems in a modern context (van Beek).

I want to single out two important points in this new edition. Barring minor exceptions like the editor's introduction, the contributors in the anthology have not included the latest developments in the field. This is a pity as one would have expected more in this regard. For example, King's contribution concludes with a positive note on Waardenburg's appeal to the issue of intentionality in religious actors. This basically discursive approach has since been developed extensively by anthropologists. A discourse-centred approach sheds light on the impasse between history and phenomenology raised by the article.

Whaling's introduction and his contribution entitled "The study of religion in a global context" introduces the reader to a number of scholars to illustrate the fact that the study of society and culture is no longer an entirely European/Western project. While this is true, one cannot but notice that the non-Western scholars he has chosen all have some inclination to addressing and re-dressing normative dimensions in religion, something which is entirely absent from the other articles. It seems to me that Whaling

has illustrated that non-Western scholars in the study of religion have not yet explored the disciplinary issues that occupy Western scholars. The fact of the matter, as pointed out in Oosten's contribution on anthropological approaches to the study of religion, is that the discipline is still belaboured by its past as a Western attempt to understand non-Western cultures. If this is the fundamental *raison d'être* of the discipline, as posited by Oosten, then what would be the role of non-Western scholars in the field?

Finally, following from the point made above, one would have expected a greater degree of deliberation and insight into the political and social context of doing religious studies. Whaling touched on it when considering non-Western contributions to the study of religion. The absence of a more systematic reflection in a book on theory and method calls for explanation. It seems that a considerable degree of deconstruction needs to be undertaken in the study of religion as a discipline.

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GUY G. STROUMSA, *Hidden Wisdom: Esoteric Traditions and the Roots of Christian Mysticism* (Studies in the History of Religions 70)—Leiden: E. J. Brill 1996 (xii + 195 pp.) ISBN 90-04-10504-2 \$70.00.

In his latest book, a convenient collection of previously published articles, Guy Stroumsa explores the existence of esoteric traditions in the early Christianities. He emphasizes the *existence* of such doctrines since the beginnings of Christianity, their *origins* primarily out of Judaism, their *adoption* and *development* among the gnostics, a consequent *decline* of Christian esotericism already before the end of the second century in light of Christian inclusivity and, finally, the *transformation* of the vocabulary of Christian esotericism into the metaphors of Christian mysticism.

Central to Stroumsa's argument is, of course, his first point: the *existence* of Christian esoteric tradition(s). Stroumsa notes that scholarly discussions of Christian esotericism have generally focussed upon cultic practice, a sociological concern which, he suggests, has "weakened emphasis on the 'ob-

jective' secret" (p. 5). There may be good reason that the issue of content has been slighted, however. The second (pseudo-) Platonic epistle, upon which Stroumsa builds much of his argument (pp. 28, 37, 107, 149, 155), counsels that "[t]he greatest safeguard [for esoteric contents] is to avoid writing and to learn by heart" (Pl. 2 *Ep.* 314C). Stroumsa emphasizes that gnostic apocalypses, for example, often similarly insist that the secrets being revealed to the reader have been kept and transmitted only orally, 'neither transcribed in a book nor written down' (*Apocalypse of Adam*, NHC V, 85, ii. 307). And, he notes that such *apokruphoi* were characteristic not only of gnosticising traditions but of early Christian literature as well. The problem, of course, is that most of our knowledge of "objective secrets" from antiquity is textual. Stroumsa thus concludes that: *[T]he genre itself seems to have been rather popular: there is no better way to publicise a text than to prohibit its publication, strongly limit its readership, or insist that it reveals deep and heavily guarded secrets* (p. 155, emphasis added). It is this adductive characteristic of esotericism that shifts scholarly attention from the *claim* to "objective secrets" to the sociological *strategy* of making such claims—a strategy that might be employed equally well by mystical traditions. Stroumsa, of course, does not deny this strategic dimension of esotericism (e.g., pp. 1, 149). He does, however, seem to grant the claims of ancient esotericism an integrity he disallows modern esotericism, which he describes as "a pot-pourri of various elements" (p. 1)—a characterization generally applied to Hellenistic religions under the more pretentious but no less helpful term "syncretism" (see Stroumsa's description of gnostic mythology as "self-conscious[ly] hybrid," p. 53).

Stroumsa has established that there likely were Christian esoteric traditions, though the evidence, e.g., the Markan "messianic secret," has elicited other interpretations. Whether the "objective" contents of these traditions were any more significant than those of various modern "secret" or esoteric societies is more problematic. Nevertheless, Stroumsa has, in these articles, consistently and compellingly called our attention to a fascinating aspect of ancient (as of modern) culture.

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RICHARD F. GOMBRICH, *How Buddhism Began: The Conditioned Genesis of the Early Teachings*—London and Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Athlone 1996 (xii, 180 p.) ISBN 0-485-17417-0 (hb.) £25.00.

The book contains the five Jordan Lectures in Comparative Religion held in 1994 at the London School of Oriental and African Studies: the public lecture on "Debate, Skill in Means, Allegory and Literalism" (Ch. 1) which was left in its original oral form only added by some footnotes; and four slightly revised lectures held in seminars on "How, not What: Kamma as a Reaction to Brahmanism" (Ch. 2), "Metaphor, Allegory, Satire" (Ch. 3), "Retracing an Ancient Debate: How Insight Worsted Concentration in the Pali Canon" (Ch. 4) and "Who was Āngulimāla?" (Ch. 5).

Professor Gombrich concentrates basically on the relationship between the historical Buddha and his doctrinal context thus supplementing his excellent study on the social context of early Buddhism (*Theravada Buddhism*, London and New York, 1988). Gombrich presents a discussion of a number of technical terms and textual problems, which are mainly based on debates and discussions of the Buddha with other religious teachers, especially brahmins. However, the lectures deal with rather separate, sometimes disparate subjects only loosely related to each other, and the (main) title of the book is not really justified since it lets the reader expect a more systematic book. The chapters themselves are full of insight, deep understanding of the texts, and brilliant knowledge of the various traditions. The book is written in a highly readable style, sometimes full of wit, free of jargon.

Chapters 1-3 pursue the question on how the teachings of the Buddha emerged from an Upaniṣadic background, in some cases almost literally (cf. p. 62f. on parallels between the *Tevijja Sutta* and the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*). After showing that the Buddha re-defined action (*kamma*) as intention, Gombrich concludes in Ch. 2: "Being lies at the heart of the Upaniṣadic world view, Action lies at the heart of the Buddha's" (p. 48). (It would be interesting to compare this analysis with early Sāṃkhya doctrine, i.e., the dynamic, but saṃsāric aspect versus the static, but soteriological aspect of the Puruṣa.) Gombrich further shows, how this doctrine almost cogently leads to ethics: in contrast to the Upaniṣadic, (early) Buddhist salvation becomes "a matter of *how* one lives, not what one is" (p. 62). Moreover, he demonstrates how the transfer of merit in Buddhism took the place which divine grace occupies in Christianity (p. 57). Chapter 5 retraces an ancient debate on the question whether Enlightenment is attainable without

mediation. Gombrich shows that Buddha himself probably never intended such a form of Enlightenment but that it might have been introduced due to scholastic literalism and the type of debates.

Philology is slow reading. Gombrich demonstrates how reading the texts with scrutiny reveals implications far beyond the concerned verse of passage. However, he presents philological details only to an extent where it is necessary for the argument. Thus, in the last chapter Gombrich gives, on philological grounds, a surprising answer to the so far unsatisfactorily discussed question who the brigand Āngulimāla was, who wore a garland of his victim's fingers before being converted into a follower of Buddha's path. Gombrich's solution to the problem is an emendation of Pāli *mahesi* into *maheso* (Skt. *maheśa*) which makes Āngulimāla to a kind of "proto-Śaiva/Śākta" (p. 151). Clearly, this reading makes the best sense so far offered to a difficult verse in the Theragāthā and Āngulimāla Sutta (MN II. 97-105) although it creates new problems as was aptly remarked in a letter to Gombrich by Prof. Alexis Sanderson, which is quoted in fn. 7 on p. 152: "There is no evidence at all among Śaiva vratins [initiated Śaiva sectarian ascetics] at any time of 'sanguineous vows ... victims'." Prof. Gombrich's emendation has no manuscript support. However he thinks it well be accepted as "probable, if not certain" (p. 11). Perhaps it is too good to be true. No doubt the Buddha encountered various fearsome brigands and ascetics. Gombrich himself quotes relevant texts (p. 143f.; for an early non-Buddhist reference to an ascetic who practised the *govrata* [living and eating like a cow] one could refer to Mahābhārata 5.97.14), but the historical evidence of somebody who wore a necklace or garland of fingers culled from living beings is non-existent. Moreover, why must the story refer to something that actually had happened? Why could it not be "just" mythological? Certainly Gombrich opened a fascinating discussion of which one hopes that it will be continued.

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Reply: *Marianne Sawicki*, Having been ousted as a crypto-Christian anti-Semite, can one say "shalom"?

Book Reviews

ZEITSCHRIFT FÜR RELIGIONSWISSENSCHAFT, 5 (1997), 1

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Stefan Pierre-Louis, Mahikari: Ritual und Heilung in einer japanischen Neuen Religion

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OBSERVATIONS ON THE SCHOLARLY STUDY OF RELIGIONS AS PURSUED IN SOME MUSLIM COUNTRIES¹

JACQUES WAARDENBURG

Summary

The article examines the study of religions at scholarly institutions in Muslim countries. As far as Islam and Islamic thought is concerned, both traditional and overly ideological approaches are problematic from a scholarly point of view. With regard to the study of religions other than Islam, interesting initiatives have been taken in several countries. Difficulties on a practical level include a lack of good handbooks in the "Islamic" languages, while books published in the West are mostly too expensive to acquire. Training in the languages of the various religious Scriptures is virtually absent. History of religions or religious studies have rarely been institutionalized. The study of some religions is seriously handicapped by political conflicts.

Among the positive developments at present is, first, the increased interest in "religions" among students and the general public. The historical, anthropological and sociological research carried out in several Muslim countries pays attention to the social role of religion. A number of Muslim students enrolled at Western universities take courses in religions.

The conclusion contends that the medieval tradition of Muslim studies of other religions could be a source of inspiration for the future. What is still much needed are competent staff, material facilities, a positive climate for intellectual pursuits, technical training in the study of texts, facts and meanings, and mental training for the pursuit of scholarly truth are needed. While perhaps acting as catalysts, Western models should not enjoy absolute authority. The author considers the pursuit of knowledge which is useful both to Muslims and to the scholarly community at large as most important.

From 15 till 18 June 1988 the IAHR organized a small conference in Marburg on the development and institutional setting of our discipline in different areas of the world.² Papers were read about the study of religions in African and Asian countries, in a Catholic and a Jewish environment, and also in a Muslim context. A Muslim speaker remarked that, fundamentally, Islam as a religion does not object to this kind of studies.³

The present paper is meant as a contribution to the same subject, leaving aside the history of Muslim views of other religions.⁴ I confine myself to making a preliminary exploration of the present-day setting of the scholarly study of religion as it exists in today's Muslim cultural area.⁵ I take here the scholarly study of religion in its broadest sense: textual studies, the history of religions, comparative studies, social scientific studies and what I call "research into meaning" including hermeneutical and semiotic approaches.⁶

I shall here survey succinctly the scholarly study of Islam, of other religions, and of religion in the perspective of the social sciences as it is pursued in at least some Muslim countries.⁷ I leave aside philosophically oriented work in which other religions are referred to but not closely studied. In conclusion I shall mention some incentives for the study of religions that can be found in the Islamic cultural tradition. In a time of encounter — rather than clash — of civilizations this tradition should be continued to the benefit of scholarship in our field, carried out by Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

1. The Study of the Islamic Religious and Cultural Tradition

Throughout Muslim civilization, all typically Islamic institutions of learning have always given much attention to Islamic thought and its history, mainly through the study of relevant Arabic texts.⁸ This Islamic thought is primarily religious thought, such as the study of the Qur'ān and its commentaries (*tafsīr*), the study of Tradition ('ilm al-*hadīth*), the study of Islamic Law or Shari'a (*fiqh*), scholastic theology (*kalām*), and also mystical thought (*taṣawwuf*). But it also includes philosophical and scientific thought within the framework of Islamic civilization, such as Aristotelian *falsafa*, Iranian *ishrāq* philosophy and cosmological doctrine.⁹

The textual study of religious thought has of course always been at the center of study in mosques or in the traditional Islamic educational institutions (*madrasas*). These generally disappeared when university institutions were established.¹⁰ Within modern universities this study is concentrated in the Faculties of Shari'a.¹¹ Although they concentrate on the study of religious Law and its sources such as Qur'ān and

hadiths, they also address disciplines like *uṣūl al-din* (principles, i.e. methodology of religious studies) and *kalām* (scholastic theology). Islamic thought can also be studied in a less traditional and more detached way in the Arts Faculties, for instance in Departments of Arabic language and literature, philosophy or history.¹² Since World War II, besides the regular universities, some new institutions have been founded in order to promote critical historical research on Islamic thought, such as the Research Institute of the Turkish Encyclopedia of Islam in Istanbul¹³, the Institute of Islamic Studies at the Hamdard University in New Delhi¹⁴ and the Royal Academy of Islamic Research in Amman.¹⁵

For the last half century the study of Islamic thought has become increasingly relevant for present-day Muslim reorientations towards Islam including what is called re-Islamization. Institutions of a new kind have been established with the more ideological aim of training students in the spirit of Islam. This happened first on a national level.¹⁶ In the second place several “international Islamic universities” were created, for instance in Islamabad and Kuala Lumpur, which attract students from many Muslim countries. These “Islamic” universities base themselves on religious principles and seek to integrate the various disciplines within an Islamic worldview, comparable with Catholic or Protestant universities aiming at such an integration within a Catholic or Protestant worldview.¹⁷ A third kind of institution working in this sense has been established in the USA at Herndon, Virginia, near Washington.¹⁸ A fourth example is the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization which is established in Kuala Lumpur, which offers international scholarships for graduate studies and research facilities.

Although studies based on an Islamic worldview may take ideological forms, there are deeper motivations which must be recognized. Religious studies nowadays, in Third World countries and not only there, are often motivated by the researcher's or student's desire to rediscover and appropriate his or her own religious and cultural heritage. Such studies are then fundamentally studies of one's own religion, culture and civilization of which one may bear witness to others.

Religious studies then lead to a new knowledge and understanding of one's own roots. They often also foster a better knowledge of the truth and values of one's own religion, and possibly a new interpretation and better practice of it.¹⁹

Although such a motivation is spiritual, it may become narrower and acquire an ideological orientation. In this case, Islam itself may then be thought of as the best of all ideological systems. Ideological orientations can mobilize people but they can also lead to intellectual subservience when certain issues cannot be questioned. They can also lead, however, to a more critical relationship between the "ideologists" on the one hand and those in power on the other.²⁰

Most Muslim countries at present have some sort of official ideology which assigns Islam a specific place in society, and often supports a kind of "official" or "officialized" version of Islam. Consequently, Islamic education in the state institutions of these countries will be in the spirit of that ideology or official version of Islam. The variety not only of the structure of tradition and forms of modernization in Muslim societies but also of their political organization accounts largely for the variety of ways in which Islam is presented in the different Muslim states. This is particularly true for "Islamic" states, such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, Pakistan and Sudan, which base themselves on the *Shari'a*, though they interpret it differently. It has consequences not only for the contents but also for the way in which Islamic studies are organized in present-day Muslim countries.²¹ It also has its effects on the way in which not only Islam but also other religions are studied, or can be studied. Yet, notwithstanding various non-scholarly pressures to which Islamic studies are exposed in a number of Muslim countries, there are always scholars, teachers and students who are less concerned with politics than with the search for truth.

2. The Study of Religions Other than Islam

Medieval Islamic civilization could be proud of scholars like al-Birūnī (973-after 1050)²² and al-Shahrastānī (1086-1153)²³ who were

“medieval” scholars of religions, but eminent ones and in the case of al-Birūnī, of recognized genius. The following centuries, however, show a lack of interest in the study of other religions than Islam. What is the present situation?²⁴

Books on Other Religions

At present there is a certain renewal of interest in this field. People with a university education, students but also a broader public ask for information about other religions. In a number of Muslim countries popular books on other religions, especially the monotheistic ones, are on sale in Arabic, Turkish, Indonesian and other languages. They are sometimes translated from Western languages, sometimes directly written in the language concerned; nearly all of them pass judgment on other religions.²⁵ As far as I could ascertain, most of these books directly (in often blunt terms) or indirectly make it clear to the reader that Islam is the only true religion, and the true alternative to the other religions that are described. This is the general starting point from which the religions are approached, but a distinction should be made. On the one hand there are what may be called apologetic, polemical and ideological accounts.²⁶ On the other hand books also exist on religions other than Islam which are more descriptive and pass judgment only at the end and in a rational way. Some informative books breathing an atmosphere and style of tolerance have seen the light for instance in Indonesia and Turkey.²⁷

Teaching and Research

Although teaching and research on other religions than Islam must be called modest, some interesting initiatives have been taken. The Research Institute of the Turkish Encyclopedia of Islam pays attention to the history of religions. At the beginning of 1998 a chair for the study of the three monotheistic religions was established at the University of Rabat, with the cooperation of Unesco. Research on ancient religions of the Near East is being planned by Prof. 'Abd

al-Majid al-Charfi in the Faculty of Arts in Manouba, at the University of Tunis. In Lebanon several universities, Christian, Muslim or otherwise, now offer courses in the field of history of religions. In countries like Turkey²⁸ and Indonesia²⁹ universities have teaching positions in the history of religions. In Malaysia and Pakistan there is some teaching of comparative religion at universities. Some universities in Muslim sub-Saharan African countries have Departments of Religion where Christianity, Islam and local traditional religions are taught. In most Muslim countries, however, as in many other Third World countries, the field of Religious Studies or History of Religions has not yet been institutionalized. This happens earlier in countries which have multifaith societies than in countries with homogeneous Muslim societies.

Library Resources

The library facilities in these countries are under great financial pressure, so that books on other religions are often dispensed with. It is painful to see that libraries which were reasonably well equipped throughout the 1950s and 1960s deteriorated sharply in the 1970s.³⁰ At present, hardly any good books in English, not to speak of other western languages, on history of religions are available in the bookshops and libraries of these countries, simply because of lack of hard currency.³¹ One could think of offering a gift of scholarly books in the field. Another initiative would be to make available translations of some important religious texts of other religions into the language of the country, possibly with comments by an adherent of the religion concerned.³² One can also think of adapting a Western introduction to the study of religions. In this way a new kind of "textbooks" of history of religions could be designed.

Teaching of Languages

As far as language teaching is concerned, ancient Indian languages like Sanskrit or Pali are taught in a number of universities in India. It would be of interest to know if they are also taught in some Muslim

universities in the Indian subcontinent. There is instruction in ancient Egyptian at the University of Cairo, and in Accadian at the University of Bagdad, but it is difficult to know to what extent ancient religious texts are studied there. Biblical Hebrew is taught at several universities, for instance at those of Cairo and Rabat. It used to be possible to study ancient and middle Persian texts — besides Arabic ones — of religions like Mazdaism and also Manicheism³³ at the University of Teheran.³⁴ It would be important to know where in Muslim countries Syriac, ancient Greek and Latin are taught.

The Study of Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism

The “heavenly” religions, which are considered to have been revealed, receive particular attention in Muslim writings; this is especially true of Christianity. A number of books, for instance, have been published in Arabic on Jesus, the Gospels and especially the early history of Christianity. These subjects are nearly always presented within the parameters of the Qur’anic data on them, but sometimes Qur’anic and Biblical data are compared.³⁵ In Iran from the 1870s on, however, there has been a tradition of more independent writing on Christianity, largely in response to the Christian missions, to which several outstanding authors have contributed.³⁶

Recently some studies have appeared in Arabic, Turkish and French on medieval Islamic polemical literature against Christianity.³⁷ Such works may serve new polemical purposes but they may also offer a reassessment of the medieval positions and a fresh consideration of the relationship between the two religions.³⁸

Besides studies like those mentioned, addressed to readers with a more open mind, a wide-spread popular and often rather cheap kind of polemical literature against Christianity continues to exist. Since they are written in Arabic, Turkish, Persian and Urdu, these writings are not well known in the West.³⁹ They fall outside our subject. Muslims who want simply to obtain information about Christianity and do not know foreign languages must be rather at a loss with only the available literature to go on. An attitude of dialogue with adherents of

other faiths may at least lead to better information and may encourage the study of other religions, including Christianity.⁴⁰

Present-day books about Judaism and Hinduism, in so far as I have been able to verify, are almost exclusively polemical, especially as far as the political use of these religions after World War II is concerned. Zionism, for instance, is considered as a political outgrowth of Judaism and viewed as a religious phenomenon.⁴¹ By comparison, Muslim refutations of Hinduism are less extreme.⁴² There are instances, on the other hand, of Muslim researchers willing to learn either Hebrew or Sanskrit in order to study Judaism or Indian religions. To what extent the results of their work have been published or disseminated in other ways is difficult to know.

Study in the West

Given the overall situation in Muslim countries in the field, students wanting to study other religions and cultures may be advised to enroll in Western universities. They require, however, besides substantial financial means, a capacity for intellectual adaptation and the courage to pursue studies in a secular climate. Well-known study programs in religion operate at present for instance at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, and at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Christianity and Muslim-Christian relations can be studied at a specialized institution connected with the University of Birmingham, which offers instruction up to the PhD level, with the participation of both Muslim and Christian teaching staff.⁴³ An older institution exists at Hartford, Connecticut, which now cooperates with Temple University.⁴⁴ In Lebanon an *Institut d'Etudes Islamo-Chrétiennes* is attached to the (Catholic) St Joseph University in Beirut, and a Center for Christian Muslim Studies (*Centre d'Etudes Christiano Islamiques*) has been established at the (Orthodox) University of Balamand near Tripoli, also with the participation of both Muslim and Christian teaching staff. Interest among Muslims in the study of Christianity has certainly been growing under the impact of the Muslim-Christian dialogue.⁴⁵

3. The Study of Religion in the Perspective of the Social Sciences

A promising perspective for Muslim studies of religion is that of sociological and anthropological research on contemporary Muslim societies. This kind of research started in the colonial period and was largely conditioned by the political interests at the time. French ethnographers and sociologists did fieldwork in North and sub-Saharan Africa,⁴⁶ while English speaking anthropologists did research in Muslim countries which were part of the British empire.⁴⁷ Since independence this tradition has been taken up critically and then further developed by Muslim researchers of the countries concerned. When studying their societies they have not necessarily taken religion as their main focus but they have been interested in its role in society.

The development of the social sciences in African and Asian countries was encouraged by scholars from France, Britain and the USA. Several research institutions were created such as the *Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Economiques et Sociales* (CERES) in Tunis, which organized numerous international colloquia and published a number of studies on Tunisian, North African and Mediterranean subjects. Recently, however, it closed down. Associations for the Study of Sociology have been founded in the Maghreb and at the conferences organized every two years by the International Society for the Sociology of Religion several North African sociologists have contributed papers on Islam as a social factor in North African societies and in the Arab world in general.

Sociological research which takes into account Islamic structures, life styles and customs is also carried out in Egypt. The Social Studies Research Center at the American University of Cairo has produced for instance interesting publications on women and family life in the country which have not been without relevance for issues like family planning. For a number of years Unesco has had a Social Science Research Office in Cairo. In Lebanon the social sciences have been developed at the American University of Beirut. They are still sparsely represented, however, at universities in Muslim countries, and not

only because of financial constraints. Much interest in social change and development has political implications, and as a rule, researchers have been cautious when religious issues are at stake.⁴⁸

The situation seems to be simpler in historical research. Mention should be made of current research interest in the social history of Muslim countries, which pays attention to the role of religion in Muslim societies and relationships between Muslim and other communities. This research which pays attention to religion is developing in countries like Egypt, Lebanon and India, where different religious and cultural traditions have met and where the study of social history is rewarding for the history of religions and their interaction. For instance, a whole range of studies have been carried out on Islam and society in the Indian context, where the history of Muslim communities and their relations with Hindu communities, including communal strife, has attracted the attention of Indian Muslim scholars. The British and American tradition of combining historical and social science research has had an important impact here on the study of religious institutions and movements in their precise historical and social contexts. In the Near East increasing attention is being paid to the study of the history of Christian communities in relation to their Muslim environment.⁴⁹

The impact of the study of religion in the perspective of the social sciences may be much more fundamental still. Muslim social historians, sociologists and anthropologists can direct their attention profitably to problems which have been neglected by mainstream Western scholarship on religion. The West indeed seems to have had a nearly innate tendency either to idealize and spiritualize religion and religious concerns or to take an overall critical attitude — sometimes ideologically inspired — towards them. The very suspicion of the West and its religion which has grown in Muslim countries in the course of the 20th century may perhaps bear scholarly fruits. In due course it could very well lead to research on Christianity and Judaism in their various social contexts in Europe and elsewhere which would throw new light on the various social roles of the Christian and Jewish religions.⁵⁰

4. Furthering Muslim Scholarly Interest in the Study of Religions

Apart from researchers and students, wider circles of people ask increasingly for reliable information about religions, in particular the living ones. The media undoubtedly awaken interest in other cultures but lack the means to respond to this interest adequately. This raises the question of how to make good general books on other religions available and how to arrive at good teaching of the subject in universities and schools.

Moreover, increasing contacts with people of other faiths have done much to correct old images and stereotypes. Reading what the Qur'ān says about Christians and Jews and developing one's ideas about that is one thing. Inquiring how they live and what they say about their beliefs is something else; it belongs to the category of empirical knowledge which can be reviewed and extended.⁵¹

Interest and research in this field can be enhanced by scholarly working groups, international symposia and colloques. The themes of "Mediterranean culture" and "Euro-Arab dialogue", for instance, have brought together European and Muslim researchers at a number of meetings in which the study of religions was part of the program. But there are also more abstract concepts in Muslim culture that can awaken interest in other religions among Muslims. An idea like that of the "heavenly religions" suggests a kind of commonality between Muslims, Christians and Jews and encourages further study of Christianity and, probably at some later time, Judaism.

Similarly, the notion of a plurality of existing religions and the growing awareness of living in plural societies with the need for adherents of different religions to work together is gaining ground in Muslim countries too. This is particularly the case in those countries which have always had a variety of religions, like Indonesia or Lebanon, or where cooperation between Muslims and Christians has become a matter of survival, like Nigeria or Sudan. Such countries could see an interest in developing the scholarly study of religions for pragmatic reasons.⁵²

Perhaps an analogy may be drawn between European and Muslim civilization as far as the beginnings of scholarly interest in our

field are concerned. Just as Europe had cultural traditions like the Renaissance, Humanism and Enlightenment from which this interest could develop in the 18th century, the Muslim civilization has a similar cultural tradition from the medieval period. Just as in Europe textual and historical studies brought new insights about the Bible, early Christianity and Judaism, in the Muslim civilization many texts are still waiting to be edited. And the social sciences can explore the role of religion in society. Just as in Europe the interest in other cultures and religions was enhanced by the voyages of discovery and increasing intercultural contacts from the 17th century on, Muslim countries have been experiencing still more thoroughgoing intercultural contacts since the 19th century. Could reputed medieval scholars such as al-Birūnī and al-Shahrastānī not be a source of inspiration for researchers from a Muslim background? Perhaps Western scholarship could be a catalyst in this process.⁵³

The development of scholarly rigour in the study of religions, Islam as well as others, demands however considerable effort, whether the study is textual, historical, or social scientific. Technical and mental training is essential for anyone seriously investigating languages, texts, historical facts and social structures of whatever religion. Apart from this, I see two obstacles to the development of the study of religions in the Muslim world which must be surmounted.

The first is the adage that Islam is the final and true religion. Whether this is true or not cannot be decided by scholarship; in fact, the study of religions modestly puts the question of the ultimate truth of these religions between brackets (*epoché*). However, the saying itself has an unfortunate impact.⁵⁴ It distracts attention from the obvious fact that there are other people than Muslims and other religions than Islam, and that they all are worth knowing. But the saying also poses a serious question to scholars in general. Why should one bother to study other religions and cultures? What can be the significance or social relevance of knowing cultures and religions other than one's own? And if one attaches the highest value to the truth of one partic-

ular religion — Islam or another one —, why should one do scholarly research about others?

The second obstacle is the fact that Islam has become increasingly politicized during the last decades. Just as the Christian churches have their own “official” interpretations of Christianity and may even claim infallibility, most Muslim countries have their “official” interpretations of Islam, apart from those given by different Muslim movements and groups. All of this stands in the way of a fair study of different orientations within Islam. An empirical and potentially critical interest in interpretations of Islam may thus become politically suspect. It may also make the study of other religions seem dubious. Showing too much interest in Christianity may be perceived as the result of having too little faith in Islam. And the fact that Judaism and Hinduism are seen as imbued with political dynamite does not facilitate their impartial study in a Muslim context.⁵⁵

The broader political context is not without relevance for this kind of studies. The last fifty years, for instance, have been much more favorable for Muslim studies of Christianity and Muslim-Christian relations in the past and present than for such studies of Judaism. Peace in the Middle East would facilitate the study of Muslim-Jewish relations in history and comparative studies, for instance, of religious Law or the interpretations of the Scriptures and other normative texts. There is a real need for studies in depth not only of relationships between the three monotheistic *religions* throughout history but also of relationships between Muslim, Christian and Jewish *communities*, especially their religious aspects in history and at the present time. Given the nature and magnitude of the task, such studies should be made in cooperation between researchers of different backgrounds.

The study of religions is a demanding field of research in its own right. Where living religions are concerned, it requires an openness for scholarly encounter and debate, and freedom of thought and expression. Such attitudes should be promoted institutionally and maintained by all researchers.

It is too soon to assess to what extent Muslim students in the West take advantage of the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the study of Islam as well as of religions in general as it is practiced there. The same holds true for the way in which they will later convey their knowledge to their countries of origin. Much depends on whether, and how, Muslim students use the facilities existing there and whom they happen to meet. Most important perhaps is whether or not they see in our studies a danger or, on the contrary, a way to truth as well as an intellectual and human enrichment.⁵⁶

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¹ A first draft of this paper was read at the 17th International Congress of History of Religions held in Mexico City, 5th to 12th August 1995. Prof. Peter Antes made some helpful suggestions on an earlier version of this text. For relevant Persian, Arabic and Turkish references I am indebted to Isabel Stümpel-Hatami, Mohanna Haddad and Gérard Groc.

² The conference was entitled "The Institutional Environment of the Study of Religion." The papers under discussion were contained in the Conference Guide. Most of them were published in Michael Pye (Ed.), *Marburg Revisited. Institutions and Strategies in the Study of Religion*. Marburg: diagonal-Verlag, 1989, 164 p.

³ This observation was made by Prof. Mahmoud Zakzouk from al-Azhar University. He added, with reference to p. 109:6, that there is a Qur'anic basis for studying not only the "celestial religions" of the *ahl al-kitāb* (Judaism and Christianity) but other religions as well. See *Marburg Revisited*, pp. 144-147. Prof. Azim A. Nanji was also in favor of the study of other religions and referred to p. 5:48, postulating a multifaith world. See *Marburg Revisited*, pp. 147-9. In the broader discussion which followed, the need for personal and institutional cooperation between scholars inside and outside the Muslim world was stressed. See *Marburg Revisited*, pp. 153-6.

⁴ See J. Waardenburg (Ed.), *Muslim Perceptions of Other Religions throughout History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999 (in the press). Compare by the same, *Islam et Sciences des Religions. Huit leçons au Collège de France*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1998 (In particular Part Two: *Approches musulmanes d'autres religions*).

⁵ This article is based on books written in "Islamic" languages, some books and articles in "Western" languages, and on oral information acquired at random. It is

a continuation of my contribution to the Marburg conference of 1988, "Religious Studies in the Muslim World," which appeared in the *Conference Guide* (pp. 49-66). Compare Peter Antes, "Religious Studies in the context of Islamic culture," *Marburg Revisited*, pp. 143-156. No bibliography exists of 19th and 20th century Muslim studies of other religions. It would be worth tracing doctoral dissertations in Western languages written by Muslim authors concerning other religions than Islam. Compare Note 23.

⁶ For this division see J. Waardenburg, *Des dieux qui se rapprochent. Introduction systématique à la science des religions*. Genève: Labor et Fides, 1993; idem, *Perspektiven der Religionswissenschaft*. Würzburg: Echter Verlag & Altenberge: Oros Verlag, 1993.

⁷ More detailed research into publications in Arabic, Turkish and other "Islamic" languages is needed to cast light on relevant new findings by Muslim scholars. Apart from more scholarly work, a mass of more popular religious writings on Islam exist in all Muslim countries.

⁸ These institutions have a long history. By way of introduction, see J. Waardenburg, "Some Institutional Aspects of Muslim Higher Education and their Relation to Islam," *Numen*, 12 (1964), pp. 96-138. On the history of Islamic education see e.g. Ahmad Shalaby, *History of Muslim Education*. Karachi, 1979. Compare Syed Ali Ashraf, *New Horizons in Muslim Education*. Cambridge, 1985.

⁹ A comprehensive view of the history of Islamic thought in this wider sense by a number of Muslim authors is given, for instance, in M.M. Sharif (Ed.), *A History of Muslim Philosophy. With Short Accounts of Other Disciplines and the Modern Renaissance in Muslim Lands*, 2 vols. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1963 and 1966. On *ishrāq* philosophy see the works of Henry Corbin. On cosmological doctrine, see Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964.

¹⁰ Traditional Islamic education had its own system of schooling and preparing future imams of greater mosques, teachers of religion, judges, Islamic scholars, etc. Most famous perhaps is al-Azhar in Cairo, which became a state university with faculties other than the "Islamic" ones in 1961. On al-Azhar see A. Chris Eccel, *Egypt, Islam, and Social Change. Al-Azhar in Conflict and Accommodation*. Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1984.

¹¹ In Turkey these faculties are called Faculties of Theology. Seven of them have chairs of history of religions.

¹² Departments of Arabic can include the study of the Qur'ān text; departments of Philosophy may give attention to the history of Islamic thought, schools of Western thought, and sometimes certain doctrines of other religions such as Christianity; departments of History can treat the history of Islamic civilization but sometimes also ancient civilizations and religions. This is the case, for instance, at the University of

Cairo where critical scholarship on the Qur'ān text developed from Muḥammad Khalfallāh in the late 1940s up to Naṣr Abū Zaid (at present attached to the University of Leiden).

¹³ When a new Turkish Encyclopedia of Islam (*İslâm Ansiklopedisi*) was planned in the early 1980s a Research Institute (*Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Araştırmaları Merkezi, İSAM*) was established in Istanbul to prepare it. Junior researchers attached to this Institute are encouraged to pursue doctoral and post-doctoral research, if necessary abroad. It has some 150 researchers on its staff and the Encyclopedia has about 2000 collaborators, inside and outside Turkey. The first volume appeared in 1988; volume 16 appeared in 1997. In the meantime a gigantic library is being built up. This is one of the largest projects of Islamic studies known to me; it is carefully planned and executed with discipline.

¹⁴ Hamdard University in New Delhi started as a private university but later became a state university. Its Institute of Islamic Studies has a rich collection of manuscripts, most of which are waiting to be studied.

¹⁵ This is the *Al al-bayt* Foundation, devoted to research on Islamic civilization. It also pays attention to Muslim-Christian relations.

¹⁶ Several institutions of Islamic studies have been established on a national level. In Pakistan, the Institute of Islamic Research was founded at the beginning of the 1960s, with Fazlur Rahman as its first Director. It was originally meant to function as an advisory body to the government; at present it is part of the International Islamic University in Islamabad. In Indonesia, the first State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN) was founded in 1960; a report shows that in 1985 there were 14 such Institutes with 84 Faculties altogether. A number of graduate students have been sent to the University of Leiden and McGill University in Montreal for further training.

¹⁷ This is called the Islamization of knowledge. This program, launched by Ismā'il Rāji al-Fārūqī, strives to develop a specifically Islamic epistemology and to study economics, anthropology, education and social sciences in general on the basis of Islamic premises. See Abū Sulaymān and 'Abdul Hamid, eds., *Islamization of Knowledge. General Principles and Work Plan*, 2nd ed. Herndon, Va., 1989. See also the article "Education: The Islamization of Knowledge" by Akbar S. Ahmed in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), Vol. 1, pp. 425-428. For a thorough study, see Leif Stenberg, *The Islamization of Science. Four Muslim Positions Developing an Islamic Modernity* (Lund Studies in History of Religions, Vol. 6). Lund, University of Lund, 1996.

¹⁸ This institution was founded by the late Ismā'il Rāji al-Fārūqī with funding from Saudi Arabia.

¹⁹ For examples of religious studies to rediscover one's own religious heritage in Africa and China, see *Marburg Revisited* (mentioned in Note 2), pp. 99-141. The remark is valid not only for quantitatively small religions such as the traditional African religions but also for the larger religions. History of religions in China is

largely the study of Chinese religions, in Japan largely that of Buddhism, etc. In many countries — including for many people in the West today — the ideal of studying far-away “foreign” religions now takes second place to that of studying one’s own “religious system” in which one can become more or less involved.

²⁰ Throughout history, Islamic educational institutions have upheld the tradition of keeping a certain aloofness from immediate political interests. This has been possible because of their financial independence as *waqf* institutions. In Iran the traditional Shi‘i religious institutions, for instance in Qum, still retain this financial independence, which allowed them, for instance, to take a critical attitude to the secularizing policies of the Shah. The Shi‘i institutions in Najaf and Karbala (Iraq) enjoyed independence until the 1970s.

²¹ In the past, teachers and students throughout the Muslim world were very mobile; students used to travel in order to study with reputed scholars. This pattern has been revived in a different form with the establishment of international Islamic universities besides the Azhar University in Cairo and the universities of Ryadh, Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia, all of them offering scholarships to thousands of students from many countries.

²² Abū'l-Rayhān al-Bīrūnī is especially known for his *Kitāb ta'rikh al-hind* (“The history of India”) or *Kitāb taḥqīq mā li'l-hind min maqūla maqbūla fi'l-'aql aw mardhūla* (“Ascertaining of statements to be accorded intellectual acceptance or to be rejected concerning India”), translated under the title of *Alberuni's India. An account of the religion, philosophy, literature, geography, chronology, astronomy, customs, laws and astrology of India about A.D. 1030* by Edward Carl Sachau (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1914. Reprint New Delhi: S. Chand, 1964). He wrote a number of scientific works, innovating at the time, some of which testify to his precise knowledge of the religious calendars, festivals, etc. of different peoples, including Christians.

²³ Abū'l-Faṭḥ al-Shahrastānī is especially known for his *Kitāb al-milal wa'l-nihāl* (“Book of religions and systems of belief”), translated into French under the title of *Livre des religions et des sectes* by Daniel Gimaret, Jean Jolivet and Guy Monnot, 2 vols. Leuven and Paris: Peeters and Unesco, 1986 and 1993. He also wrote on the Islamic religious sciences, in particular *kalām*.

²⁴ Comp. J. Waardenburg, “Twentieth-century Muslim writings on other religions: A proposed typology,” in *Proceedings of the 10th Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants* (Edinburgh 9-16 September 1980), ed. by Robert Hilenbrand (Edinburgh, 1982, pp. 107-115); the same, “Religious Studies in the Muslim world,” *Conference Guide* (The Institutional Environment of the Study of Religion, Conference Marburg, 15-18 June 1988), pp. 49-66; the same, “Muslimisches Interesse an anderen Religionen im soziopolitischen Kontext des 20. Jahrhunderts,” in *Loyalitätskonflikte in der Religionsgeschichte. Festschrift für Carsten Colpe* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1990), pp. 140-152. See also Note 4.

On the history of the study of history of religions in Turkey see Hikmet Tanyu, "Türkiye'de dinler tarihi'nin tarihçesi," *Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, vol. 8 (1961), pp. 109-124; Mustafa Erdem, "Türkiye'de dinter tarihi sahasında yapılmış lisansüstü tezler üzerine düşüneler," *Türkiye I. Dinler Tarihi Araştırmaları Sempozyumu* (24-25 Eylül 1992). Samsun 1992, pp. 83-95.

²⁵ A few examples of books written by Muslim authors may be given:

In Arabic: Muḥammad Abū Zahra, *Muḥādarāt fi'l-naṣrāniyya. Tabḥathu fi'l-adwār allatī marrat 'alaihā 'aqā'id al-naṣrārā wa-fi kutubihim wa-fi majāmi'i him al-muqaddasa wa-firaqihim* ("Lectures on Christianity, treating the stages through which the dogmas of Christianity have passed, their Books, their Ecumenical Councils and their divisions"). Cairo: Dār al-kitāb al-'arabi, 1949) and *Al-diyānāt al-qadīma* ("The ancient religions"). Cairo: Dār al-fikr al-'arabi, 1965. The first book seeks to be informative but it represents the traditional Islamic view of Christianity and is still authoritative. Muhsin al-Ābid, *Madkhal fi ta'rikh al-adyān* ("Introduction to the history of religions"). Sousse: Dār al-kitāb, 1973. A large work which discusses the value of other beliefs and practices is Ḥasan Khālid, *Mawqif al-islām min al-wathanīyya wa'l-yahūdiyya wa'l-naṣrāniyya* ("Islam's attitude to paganism, Judaism and Christianity"). Beirut: Ma'had al-innā' al-'arabi, 1986.

In Turkish: Günay Tümer & Abdurrahman Küçük, *Dinler Tarihi* ("The history of religions"). Ankara: Eylül, 3rd ed. 1997, 472 p. and Hilmi Yavuz, *Dinler Tarihi Ansiklopedisi*. ("Encyclopedia of the History of Religions"). Istanbul, 1976, 720 p. See also Kürşat Demirci, *Dinler Tarihinin Meseleleri* ("Introduction to the history of religions"). Istanbul, İnsan Yayınları, 1997, 100 p. In libraries one can still find the "classical" work of the German (non-Muslim) scholar Annemarie Schimmel, *Dinler Tarihine Giriş* ("Introduction to the history of religions"). Ankara, 1955, 260 p.

In Persian: Muḥammad Javād Mashkūr, *Khulāsa-i adyān dar tarikh-i dīnhā-i buzurg*. 3rd ed. Teheran: Intishārāt-i sharq, 1989.

In Indonesian: H. Abu Ahmadi, *Perbandingan agama*. ("The study of religions"). Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 1970 with several reprints, and A. Mukti Ali, *Ilmu perbandingan agama* ("The scholarly study of religions"). Yogyakarta: Yayasan Nida, 1975.

²⁶ Ahmad Shalabi, *Muqāranat al-adyān* ("The comparison of religions"). Cairo: Maktabat al-nahda al-haditha. It contains four volumes: *al-Masīhiya* ("Christianity") (1960), *al-Islām* ("Islam") (1961), *Adyān al-hind al-kubrā: al-hindawīya, al-jaynīya, al-būdhīya* ("The great religions of India: Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism") (1964), and *al-Yahūdiya* ("Judaism") (1965). It has been reprinted several times, and translated into Indonesian, Urdu and Turkish.

²⁷ Such studies have been made especially by students of Prof. Mukti Ali in Yogyakarta. I have not yet found similar empirical descriptive "phenomenological" accounts of religious phenomena in other Muslim countries. In Turkey Hikmet Tanyu and his disciples established history of religions as a discipline. Compare Note 23.

²⁸ When the Faculty of Theology was established at the University of Ankara in 1949, it comprised a chair of history of religions. Prof. Annemarie Schimmel taught there from 1954 until 1959.

²⁹ The State Institutes for Islamic Studies have Departments of Comparative Religion in their Faculty of *Ushuluddin* (Principles of religion). The University of Yogyakarta has a teaching program of comparative religion initiated by Prof. Mukti Ali; it takes also initiatives in the field of interreligious dialogue. Compare Notes 39 and 51.

³⁰ The Library of the Institute of Islamic Research for example, now attached to the International Islamic University in Islamabad, acquired many books on comparative religion in its first decade, during the 1960s. After the departure of Fazlur Rahman acquisitions in this field virtually stopped.

³¹ There are exceptions, however, such as the library of the Research Institute of the Turkish Encyclopedia of Islam in Istanbul (See Note 13). The library of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC) in Kuala Lumpur has a good collection of books on the different world religions. It succeeded in acquiring part of Bertold Spuler's personal library.

³² One might also think of translating some of the volumes of the series "Spirituality of Mankind" into at least one oriental language, retaining some of the texts in the original language.

³³ See for instance the monumental collection of Arabic texts on Manicheism edited and studied by S.H. Taqizādeh and Ahmad Ashgār al-Shirāzī, *Mānī va dīn-i ī* ("Mani and his religion"). Teheran, 1935/1956.

³⁴ The religion of Zarathustra has always aroused curiosity and interest among Iranian intellectuals as part of the national heritage.

³⁵ See Hugh P. Goddard, *Muslim Perceptions of Christianity*. London: Grey Seale Books, 1996. See also his bibliography "Works about Christianity by Egyptian Muslim Authors, 1940-1980," *The Muslim World* 80 (1990), pp. 251-277.

³⁶ See Isabel Stümpel-Hatami, *Das Christentum aus der Sicht zeitgenössischer iranischer Autoren. Eine Untersuchung religionskundlicher Publikationen in persischer Sprache*. Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 1996.

³⁷ In Arabic: 'Abd al-Majid al-Sharfi, *Al-fikr al-islāmi fi'l-radd 'alā 'l-naṣārā ilā nihāyat al-qarn al-rābi'/ al-'āshir* ("Islamic thought in its refutation of Christians up to the end of the 4th / 10th century"). Tunis: Al-dār al-tūnisiyya li'l-nashr and Algiers: Al-mu'assasa al-wataniyya li'l-kitāb, 1986. The conclusion was translated into French by R. Caspar, "Pour une nouvelle approche du christianisme par la pensée musulmane," *Islamochristiana* 13 (1987), pp. 61-77. Compare, by the same author: "Polémiques islamo-chrétiennes à l'époque médiévale," *Studia Religiosa Helvetica*, Jahrbuch Vol. 1 (Bern etc.: Peter Lang, 1995), 261-274.

In Turkish: Mehmet Aydin, *Müslümanların hristiyanlığa karşı yazdığı reddiyeler ve tartışma konuları* ("The refutations written by Muslims against Christians and the subjects of their disputes"). Konya: Selçuk Üniversitesi basımevi, 1989.

In French: Ali Bouamama, *La littérature polémique musulmane contre le christianisme depuis ses origines jusqu'au XIIIe siècle*. Algiers: Entreprise nationale du livre, 1988.

³⁸ A contribution in this sense is the PhD Dissertation by Ghulam Haider Aasi, "Muslim Understanding of Other Religions". An Analytical Study of *Ibn Hazm's Kitāb al-faṣl fī al-milal wa-al-ahwā' wa al-nihā'*, submitted at Temple University in 1986 (XII + 452 p.). Dr. Aasi prepared his dissertation under the late Professor Ismā'il R. al Fārūqī, one of the first Muslim scholars to develop the project of an "Islamic" science of religion able to contribute to interreligious dialogue. See his article "History of Religions. Its Nature and Significance for Christian Education and the Muslim-Christian Dialogue," *Numen*, 12 (1965), pp. 35-95. Al Fārūqī wrote a long study *Christian Ethics* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1967). Here he studies New Testament and patristic data in detail, to judge these according to Islamic criteria. Apart from the fact that the author neglects for instance 20th century Christian ethical thinking, his study is an evaluative, not an empirical one. Given this orientation it is regrettable that he does not go into the ethical dimension of Muslim-Christian cooperation and dialogue. Fundamentally, the book asserts confrontation between Islam and Christianity, even in matters of ethics.

³⁹ The other way round, one must add that the presentation of Christianity by Westerners in these languages has often been of a rather cheap apologetical nature too. Christian polemical literature against Islam has mostly been rather blinkered.

⁴⁰ This is certainly the case in Indonesia where interfaith dialogue has been officially encouraged for the last thirty years. An "Institute for the Study of Religious Harmony" was founded in Yogyakarta in 1993; in 1995 a new periodical saw the light, *Religiosa. Indonesian Journal on Religious Harmony*, published by the State Institute of Islamic Studies in Yogyakarta. Compare Note 51.

⁴¹ Mohanna Y.S. Haddad, *Arab Perspectives of Judaism. A Study of Image Formation in the Writings of Muslim Arab Authors, 1948-1978*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Utrecht, 1984, XXII + 564 pp. This study makes clear how much the interest in other religions is conditioned by contextual factors. In case of political conflict, a distorted view of the religion of the other party arises, especially if this religion plays a role in the conflict.

⁴² See for instance for positive statements about Hinduism, Rasheeduddin Khan, "Towards understanding Hinduism: Reflections of some eminent Muslims," in his book *Bewildered India. Identity, Pluralism, Discord*. New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications, 1995, Chapter 8 (pp. 153-192).

⁴³ Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, U.K. The Centre was founded in 1975.

⁴⁴ The Duncan Black Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations at Hartford Seminary, Hartford, CT, U.S.A.

⁴⁵ See for instance Muslim contributions in *Islamochristiana*, an annual (Catholic) publication devoted to dialogue on an intellectual and spiritual level and published by the Pontifical Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Rome since 1975. See also contributions by Muslims published in *The Muslim World* (since 1910) and *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* (since 1990).

⁴⁶ For instance Octave Depont and Xavier Coppolani, *Les confréries religieuses musulmanes*. Algiers: A. Jourdain, 1897.

⁴⁷ One thinks of the many studies by John Spencer Trimingham about Islam in Africa.

⁴⁸ There are exceptions too. The Center of Political and Strategic Studies of the Egyptian journal al-Ahrām published in 1995 a large Report on the religious situation in Egypt (*Taqrir al-Ḥāla 'l-dīniyya fī Miṣr*) of some 389 pages, with precious details of official and non-official religious institutions, movements and groups. This is an example of what I mean by the social sciences contribution of Muslim researchers on religion.

⁴⁹ There is a clear trend among present-day Muslim Arab historians to see and describe the history of the Christian communities within the broader Arab history. This is in sharp contrast to an earlier "confessional" historiography.

⁵⁰ Muslim researchers, perhaps less distracted by excessive specialization and what may be called scientific precision engineering, may display a capacity to put forward a more comprehensive view of the roles of particular religions in specific situations. This could enhance the study of the role of religion as an overall motivation of people and groups of people, which leads to their transformation. It could also enhance the study of the social and political strategies in which a particular religion is used for other purposes than purely religious ones. This social science perspective can of course be taken by any scholar but it seems to us that Muslim scholars can make a special contribution since they are more familiar with linkages between socio-political and religious action. They may also be more sensitive to the positive fruits of such linkages.

⁵¹ The two can also be combined. One example is the work of the Muslim-Christian Research Group GRIC (*Groupe de Recherches Islamo-Chrétien*), a team of Muslim and Christian scholars working together. Thanks to their efforts, three substantial publications saw the light: *The Challenge of the Scriptures*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1989, the original French edition of which appeared in 1987; *Foi et justice. Un défi pour le christianisme et l'islam*. Paris: Centurion, 1993, and *Pluralisme et laïcité. Chrétiens et musulmans proposent*. Paris: Bayard/Centurion, 1996.

⁵² On the study of religions in Indonesia, see Karel A. Steenbrink, "The Study of Comparative Religion by Indonesian Muslims," *Numen*, Vol. 37 (1990), pp. 141-167. Could a country like Indonesia, for instance, known for its efforts on behalf of

dialogue, not organize, in cooperation with the IAHR, a workshop or conference of Muslim scholars working in the field of the scholarly study of religions?

⁵³ This does not imply that the present-day European or American study of religion should be considered as the only model possible. The birth of the study of religion in Europe was linked closely to 19th century cultural and social conditions and 19th century forms of religion. And the situation was different in the different countries, for instance France, England, Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands. For a general overview see Eric J. Sharpe, *Comparative Religion. A History*. Second edition La Salle, Ill.: Open Court Publishers, 1986. For the beginnings of the history of religions see Hans G. Kippenberg, *Die Entdeckung der Religionsgeschichte. Religionswissenschaft und Moderne*. München: C.H. Beck Verlag, 1997. For relations with German Protestant theology, see Sigurd Hjelde, *Die Religionswissenschaft und das Christentum. Eine historische Untersuchung über das Verhältnis von Religionswissenschaft & Theologie*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994. For relations with French Catholic theology, see Henry Pinard de la Boullaye, *L'Etude comparée des religions. Essai critique*. 2 vols. Paris: Beauchesne, 1922 and 1925. For relations with orthodox Judaism, see Julius Carlebach (Ed.), *Wissenschaft des Judentums. Anfänge der Judaistik in Europa*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1992.

One must make a distinction between the situation of Muslim researchers working in the various Muslim countries and that of those working in the West. Certainly in the case of the latter, there is no reason a priori why researchers of a Muslim background should not work alongside researchers of a Christian, Buddhist or other background. It seems to me that the proof of true scholarship will lie in its capacity to detach itself — in the study of Islam but also in religious studies generally — from its specifically Western context while maintaining scholarly discipline. It is because of the universal validity of its rational and empirical findings, and not because of its adherence to particularly Western norms and values, that the study of religions as a discipline will be taken seriously by Muslim and other non-Western researchers. This will also encourage cooperation between researchers of different backgrounds; as far as Islam is concerned, Muslim and non-Muslim researchers need to work together.

⁵⁴ The same remark should be made about the impact of similar claims by other religions and ideologies. Whether such claims are right or wrong is a different matter; what we want to argue is that they stand in the way of careful empirical research and are a burden on scholars. Even if researchers want to devote themselves to study for the sake of scholarly knowledge and truth, they always work in a cultural and social climate which hardly appreciates and certainly does not encourage innovative knowledge of other religions or ideologies, whether Islam, Judaism, Christianity or any other. Absolutizing discourses are a burden on a scholar's mind!

⁵⁵ Just as in the Muslim study of Judaism and Christianity a problem is presented by the fact that the Qur'an gives some value judgments which are positive though not empirical, in the study of the Asian religions like Buddhism or Hinduism the problem

is reversed. The Islamic tradition has given a very negative evaluation, accusing them of atheism or polytheism. Neither positive nor negative general evaluations from whatever source should impinge on the empirical study of religions as they are constructed and lived.

⁵⁶ The author will be grateful for supplementary information about the study of religions as pursued in Muslim countries.

THE STRUCTURE OF FRENCH ROMANTIC HISTORIES OF RELIGIONS

ARTHUR MCCALLA

Summary

This article analyzes the histories of religions of Louis de Bonald, Antoine Fabre d'Olivet, Pierre-Simon Ballanche, and Ferdinand d'Eckstein. Rather than offer yet another definition of Romanticism, it seeks to establish a framework by which to render intelligible a set of early nineteenth-century French histories of religions that have been largely ignored in the history of the study of religion. It establishes their mutual affinity by demonstrating that they are built on the common structural elements of an essentialist ontology, an epistemology that eludes Kantian pessimism, and a philosophy of history that depicts development as the unfolding of a preexistent essence according to an *a priori* pattern. Consequent upon these structural elements we may identify five characteristics of French Romantic histories of religions: organic developmentalism; reductionism; hermeneutic of harmonies; apologetic intent; and reconceptualization of Christian doctrine. Romantic histories of religions, as syntheses of traditional faith and historical-mindedness, are at once a chapter in the history of the study of religion and in the history of religious thought.

This article analyzes the histories of religions of Louis de Bonald (1754-1840), Antoine Fabre d'Olivet (1767-1824), Pierre-Simon Ballanche (1776-1847), and Ferdinand d'Eckstein (1790-1861). It establishes their mutual affinity by demonstrating that they are constructed on parallel conceptions of ontology, epistemology, and philosophy of history. It is on the presence of these common structural elements, rather than the fact that they are set out in works published in France between 1796 and 1829, that I place these histories of religions together. I do not, therefore, wish to argue that these four thinkers belong together in every respect. They attended rival salons, and diverge considerably in their attitudes toward, *inter alia*, Catholic orthodoxy, the Restored Bourbon monarchy, and the literary *batailles* of the period. The Catholic Traditionalist Bonald and the Illuminist Fabre

d'Olivet, moreover, are usually excluded from studies of literary Romanticism and appear hedged around with qualifications in studies of Romantic religious thought.¹ I group these four histories of religion under the rubric *Romantic* because they were constructed in the intellectual context created by the two fundamental late eighteenth-century intellectual revolutions: the historicization of culture in the wake of Herder, and the epistemological pessimism arising from Kant's restriction of scientific knowledge to the phenomenal world of appearances and his denial of the possibility of rational knowledge of the noumenal world of ultimate truth. My intent is not to offer yet another definition of Romanticism but to establish a framework by which to render intelligible a set of early nineteenth-century French histories of religions that have been largely ignored in the history of the study of religion.

Louis de Bonald

Bonald, along with Joseph de Maistre and the early Félicité de Lamennais, was the great protagonist of the Catholic Traditionalist reaction against the doctrines of the French Enlightenment. Linking the Protestant Reformation, the Enlightenment, and the French Revolution in an unholy trinity of cause and effect, Bonald identified rationalism and individualism as the enemies of religious truth and socio-political stability. He devoted his life to the proposition that the sole bulwark against both intellectual and social anarchy is the authority of the Catholic church.²

Bonald built his system — which proceeds from point to point, in the fashion of scholastic logic — on the fundamental propositions that human ideas, values, beliefs, etc. derive not from reflection on innate ideas, as Enlightenment thinkers had argued, but from language, and that language, in turn, is not a human invention but was revealed to earliest humanity by God. This primitive revelation — the first, and basis of all subsequent, human knowledge — carried with it awareness of a superior being, and from this awareness followed the rudiments of religion and society. Transmission of primitive revelation

from generation to generation connects humanity to God and human beings to each other, thereby forming the basis of both religious truth and social order.³ Bonald's Traditionalism is both an authoritarian theory of society and an anti-rationalist theory of knowledge. It teaches that whenever humanity, seduced by rationalism and individualism, cuts itself off from the authority of inherited Tradition it falls into error and anarchy. Epistemologically, the idea of primitive revelation and its transmission allows Bonald to elude Kantian epistemological pessimism and establish certain knowledge of the divine order in a manner commensurate with the faculties of fallen humanity.

Since Bonald identifies religion and society his philosophy of history incorporates a history of religions. The starting point of Bonald's history of religions is the principle of universality, which in turn is a corollary of primitive revelation. All peoples possess the elementary religious sentiments of God and the immortality of the soul because primitive revelation is the universal inheritance of humanity.⁴ These sentiments comprise natural religion (or patriarchal religion, as Bonald alternatively calls it). Bonald draws on the scholastic definition of "nature" in order to distinguish the true sense of natural religion from the perversions it has undergone at the hands of Enlightenment theorists of religion. Deriving "nature" from the verb *naître* ["to be born"], Bonald glosses the etymology: "a being is born for an end, and with the means of reaching it; this end and these means comprise its nature".⁵ In accord with this teleological definition of "nature" Bonald's natural religion is "natural" not because it arises from the innate capacities of humanity (the error of Enlightenment theorists) but because, as the force that raises humanity from a state of ignorance toward the fulfilment of its being, it is the religion appropriate to the earliest stage of human development.⁶

If all peoples receive through primitive revelation the same natural religion what accounts for the diverse beliefs and practices of the various religions of the world? Although Bonald distinguishes between idolatry and paganism — idolatry is the false worship of God; paganism is the worship of false gods⁷ — he attributes the

“absurdities and abominations” of both to the corruption of natural religion through the exercise of the imagination.⁸ Bonald finds the proper development of natural religion in Judaism and Christianity: “natural religion is the seed of the Judaic religion, and the Christian or revealed religion is the development, the perfecting, the fulfilment of the Judaic religion”.⁹

The organic metaphor of the growth of a seed is Bonald’s preferred expression of the teleological theory of development exemplified by his history of religions: “Truth, like humanity and like society, is a seed that develops by the succession of time and generations, always old in its beginnings, always new in its successive developments”.¹⁰ Truth can both develop and be eternal because for Bonald, as for the scholastics from whom he derived the image, a seed can develop in only one way, the way intrinsically determined by its final cause.¹¹ A corollary of this organic conception of development is that the fully developed form of something displays nothing that was not already contained embryonically in its earlier forms. Bonald does not hesitate to draw out the implications for religion: “All the beliefs belonging to Christianity and all the practices of its worship, deriving from the awareness of the mediator, were implicitly contained in patriarchal religion, where the mediator was announced, and *figured* in Judaism, where the mediator was expected”.¹² Bonald’s construction of natural religion, Judaism, and Christianity as what he alternatively calls the three sequential ages of monotheism or the religion of the unity of God historicizes the venerable Christian practice of a figural reading of the Old Testament and classical Antiquity.¹³

Antoine Fabre d’Olivet

Fabre d’Olivet’s Illuminism, set out in a series of works published between 1813 and 1824,¹⁴ belongs to the esoteric tradition of thought that in its modern western form derives above all from Jakob Boehme (1575-1624). Boehme’s theosophy depicts creation as the emanated self-manifestation of God. A Fall at the spiritual level produces the physical universe, and a second Fall — that of primordial Adam,

who was created with a radiant body of light — separates humanity from God and incarnates it in the physical universe. Light from the spiritual world is invisibly active in the sunlight of our world, just as the spiritual nature of creation remains present, though hidden, at the heart of the physical world. The Illuminist cosmos is thereby a universe of mirrors and correspondences. It is the cosmic task of humanity to restore creation to its original spiritual state, and in so doing restore its own eternal nature. Restoration is possible because the Fall has obscured but not entirely blocked our perception of the divine light pervading the universe. Our intellectual¹⁵ nature responds to the divine light by means of the imagination (*imagination*), a supra-rational epistemological faculty that permits access to different levels of reality through the use of mediations such as symbolic images. Imagination, in Boehme's phrase, is the "eye of fire" that sees through the world of appearances to the spiritual world within.¹⁶

Fabre d'Olivet's Illuminist drama is played out in a Boehmian cosmos in which divine emanation bathes the universe in divine forces and humanity, created as primordial Adam, is a spiritual being of great power. Fabre identifies un fallen humanity with the Will, which, along with Providence and Destiny, is one of the three powers, or cosmogonic principles, of the universe. While the Fall has obscured this glorious identity, Fabre d'Olivet insists that the human essence is distinct from lower essences and that there is no continuity between the natural world and humanity. Fallen humanity displays a triple nature, at once body, soul, and spirit, and lives a triple life, instinctive, passionate [*animique*], and intellectual (i.e., spiritual). These three lives, when they are fully developed, intermingle and are confounded into a fourth, or volitive, life. Through the exercise of the volitive life, which is proper to it, humanity gradually reintegrates primordial Adam and raises itself to the reattainment of its cosmogonic status. Humanity's (future) achievement of this status is the prerequisite for the reestablishment of harmony among the three cosmogonic principles of Providence, Will, and Destiny. The reestablishment of cosmogonic harmony, in turn, will create, replicating on the macro-

cosmic level the fourth life of humanity, a fourth power that is the very image or mirror of divinity and the realization of Fabre's version of Illuminist reintegration.¹⁷

Fabre d'Olivet's epistemology, rather than simply reasserting Boehme's teaching on *imaginatio*, takes up and purports to refute Kant's epistemological pessimism. Fabre's argument is based on the fundamental Illuminist distinction between rationality and reason. Rationality, he says, is a secondary faculty that corresponds to soul, the middle term of the triple nature of humanity as body, soul, and spirit; reason, or intellectuality, is a principal faculty that corresponds to spirit, the highest term of our triple nature. Fabre argues that Kant misled himself because, confusing rationality with intellectuality, he failed to understand the spiritual nature of reason. The result of Kant's error is a philosophy that first strips humanity of its spiritual faculties, then attempts to grasp spiritual truths with a faculty incommensurate with them, and finally, the attempt having necessarily failed, declares the spiritual truths to be unknowable.¹⁸ Fabre, in short, overcomes Kant's epistemological pessimism by redefining reason as an intuitive faculty capable of grasping the ontological Absolute.¹⁹

Humanity may be a power in the cosmos, but since the Fall it is a power only in germ. Through the interaction of humanity with Fabre d'Olivet's other two cosmogonic powers, Providence and Destiny, humanity must develop its potential as the growth of a plant unfolds what is contained in its seed.²⁰ This is not a casual analogy (no analogy is causal to an Illuminist). The essences of all species, including humanity's ontologically unique essence, were placed in them by God at the creation. Because the will of a being corresponds to its essence, individuals and species alike develop — that is, progressively realize the external characteristics appropriate to their essences — by means of the repeated exercise of the will:

It is by its efficient volitive faculty, emanated from its principle, that each being conforms to its external appearance. Naturalists who have claimed that a tiger is a tiger because its teeth, claws, stomach, intestines conform in a certain way have spoken frivolously and without learning. . . . A tiger has these teeth, these

claws, this stomach, these intestines because it is a tiger; that is to say, because its efficient volitive faculty has so constituted it.²¹

Humanity, although distinct from all other creatures by its participation in Divinity, undergoes the same process of development of its preexistent essence: "humanity is a divine seed that develops by the reaction of its senses. Everything is innate in it".²² In 1824 Fabre d'Olivet organized a group of disciples into a sect, *Théodoxie universelle*. Fabre cast his cult in the form of a masonic lodge except that, in a striking exemplification of the shift from a mechanistic to an organic worldview, he replaced the traditional masonic and architectural symbolism and paraphernalia with substitutes derived from agriculture. The human soul, he taught his followers, is a seed that requires cultivation to blossom.²³ Fabre d'Olivet finds authority for his fundamental image of the seed in the Hebrew Bible (albeit in the theosophic version of Moses' teaching he himself "restored" in *La Langue hébraïque restituée*). The first word of Genesis, *bereshith*, according to Fabre, ought not be translated "in the beginning" but rather "*in principio*", "in principle", "in potential". Creation signifies not the act of bringing something into being out of nothing but a process of bringing something from potential being into actual being.²⁴

History, as disclosed by the organic metaphor of the seed, is for Fabre d'Olivet the progressive unfolding of what is already in humanity as its essence. The result is a teleological philosophy of history, in which the consequences of humanity's constitutive metaphysical principles are played out in time and space. Fabre's *Histoire philosophique du genre humain* (1824) sketches the development of humanity through the interaction of its Will with the other two cosmogonic powers, Providence and Destiny, over 12,000 years of history. Fabre insists that history is meaningful only when it is explicitly subordinated to metaphysics: "It is at once ridiculous and odious to claim to trace the route of human history without being perfectly instructed about the place from where humanity departed, about where it tends, and the object of its voyage".²⁵

In *Les Vers dorés de Pythagore* (1813) Fabre d'Olivet offers a three-fold classification of religions. The goal of all initiations and of all religions, he says, is union with God. This experience is not only extremely rare but also ineffable. For such experiences to be communicated they must be transformed into myths, rational doctrines, and sensible forms. Because such an act of transformation necessarily introduces illusions, logical contradictions, and misleading imagery, silence was imposed on the initiates of Antiquity. Nevertheless, the various religions of the world are particular transformations of the unitive experience effected by a founder of genius. Such a *législateur théocrate* or *sage théosophe* gives sensible form to spiritual truths, thereby making accessible to the masses what otherwise would be restricted to a tiny elite. Religions differ, despite having the same goal of unity with Divinity, because their various founders chose to translate the spiritual truths into distinct myths, doctrines, and sensible forms.²⁶ The diversity of religions, however, can be ordered into three classes. Fabre insists that, corresponding to the triple nature of humanity (intellectual, rational, instinctual), Divinity can be envisaged in only three ways: tritheism (three gods or one god in three persons), dualism, and polytheism. Tritheist religions arise when Divinity reveals itself to the spiritual faculty of human intelligence under the emblem of the universal ternary (Providence, Will, Destiny). Fabre identifies as tritheist religions in which three deities are dominant, including the religions of India (Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra) and Greece and Rome (Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto), as well as those that feature three principal modifications of the same God, as in, according to his interpretation, the religions of China, Japan, Tibet, and various Buddhist sects. Dualist religions arise when Divinity reveals itself to the rational faculties of humanity as a natural or ethical dualism. While pure examples of dualist religion are rare — Zoroastrianism and Manichaeism — it freely mixes with tritheism and polytheism. Polytheist religions arise when Divinity reveals itself to the instinctual faculties of humanity by means of material images. Polytheism, in its diverse forms the religion of the common people all over the world, is both the cradle and the tomb of the higher religions of

dualism and tritheism. While it can lead to the knowledge of natural principles (dualism), it can also choke off all spiritual awareness under the riotous growth of material imagery, thereby precipitating entire peoples into idolatry and superstition.²⁷ All positive religions encountered in the world are either a pure form or a combination of tritheism, dualism, or polytheism. Just as, however, Fabre teaches that the full development of the triple nature of humanity produces a fourth, or volitive life, so he posits the existence of a fourth form of religion that is founded on the absolute unity of God. Divinity considered in the volitive unity of humanity produces union with God — the ineffable experience of contemplatives and mystics.²⁸ Volitive religion corresponds to the experience of initiates in all historical periods.

If *Les Vers dorés de Pythagore* classifies religions according to the faculties of humanity, *Histoire philosophique du genre humain* relates the history of religions to the historical development of humanity toward reintegration through the interaction of its Will with Providence and Destiny. *Histoire philosophique*, Fabre remarks in its “Dissertation introductory”, is built on the distinction between the forms of religions, political doctrines, etc. and their essences. Forms are dependent on exigencies of time and place; essences are homogenous, demonstrating “the existence of a great Unity, an eternal source, from which everything flows”.²⁹ Near the end of the second volume Fabre states that the forms of the various religions derive from Destiny and Will, whereas their essences are always Providential. While it is true that religion has often been the cause of strife, this is solely the result of conflict between forms of religion, which are properly political conflicts. In their Providential essences all religions derive from and point to the same divine unity, whose terrestrial expression — theocratic world empire — is the goal to which history, including the history of religions, is moving as the culmination of the historical phase of the reintegration of primordial Adam.³⁰ Between these two passages the bulk of *Histoire philosophique du genre humain* outlines an evolution of religions. Fabre depicts a series of providential religions, each revealed by a “divine man” or *homme providentiel*, which

human egoism and ambition (the misuse of the Will) successively distort into superstition and cruel rituals, necessitating the advent of another *homme providentiel* bearing a new revelation. *Hommes providentiels* (first, the Druid Ram, then, *inter alia*, Krishna, Orpheus, Moses, Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad) are instruments Providence uses to guide wilful humanity along the right path. The history of religions unfolds from the worship of the stars and ancestors through the religions of Europe, Asia, and the Near East toward the culmination of history in a theocratic world government as the pure expression of Providence. Progress is not continuous; there are many setbacks and ages of decadence (superstition). But this is all part of the development of humanity because the goal is spiritual education, and catastrophe is often a better teacher than comfort.³¹

The shift from a taxonomy of religions in *Les Vers dorés de Pythagore* to the history of religions in *Histoire philosophique du genre humain* reflects in part the sense of historical evolution that Fabre d'Olivet acquired, according to Cellier, during the Bourbon Restoration.³² It was not, however, something entirely new, but merely a matter of applying to history the organic theory of development already contained in his early theosophical works. Behind the exoteric history of religions, or the beliefs commensurate with a given stage of spiritual development reached by the masses, lies a perennial hidden teaching reserved for initiates alone.³³ Initiation discloses the drama of the reintegrative process, the end and meaning of the unfolding of history. Eventually the two will converge in the consummation of history and the reintegration of primordial Adam. The history of religions is the playing out in time, and the content of initiation is the revelation of, the metaphysical principles of Fabre's own theosophy.

Pierre-Simon Ballanche

The intellectual career of the deeply, if heterodoxically, Catholic Ballanche began under the influence of Joseph de Maistre and Bonald. Ballanche, however, influentially modified Traditionalism by adding

to it an element of social progressivism. His work also displays familiarity with a wide range of esoteric thought, not least that of Fabre d'Olivet, whom he knew personally.³⁴

Ballanche believed that the divine order underlying the material universe is discernible through the complementary mediations of primitive revelation and symbolic imagination. The symbolic imagination of the poet, penetrating the essence of beings and things, intuits spiritual truths and translates them into material form.³⁵ Ballanche's conception of the poet-seer — as in his own *Vision d'Hébal* (1831) — is a version of the fundamental Romantic conviction that poetic imagination transcends historical divisions and sees into the permanent life of things.³⁶ Within Ballanche's thought, however, the symbolic imagination of the inspired poet is not the only, or even the principal, source of humanity's knowledge of the divine order. Ballanche holds that remnants of prelapsarian direct contact with God survived the Fall. This primitive revelation (which is not, as for Catholic Traditionalists, a postlapsarian gift that compensates for the loss of direct contact with God, but rather a partial survival of that original contact) contains the spiritual truths of the nature and end of humanity and the providential law governing history. The content of primitive revelation has been transmitted through an unbroken chain of initiations down the ages.

The spiritual truths of Ballanche's primitive revelation comprise a philosophy of history, in which, as indicated by the titles of Ballanche's major works, *Institutions sociales* (1818) and *Essais de Palingénésie sociale* (1827-1831 [unfinished]), the social order receives pride of place. Social palingenesis, or social evolution, is the sequence of births, deaths, and rebirths of societies throughout the centuries of human history. Each new stage of social evolution effects the initiation of a greater proportion of humanity into knowledge of the primitive revelation and full participation in religion and society. Changes in social order are traumatic and often violent since the birth of a new order requires the death of the old.³⁷ While each social evolutionary advance, then, must be won at the price of suffering, such suffering has a purpose: it is the means by which humanity expiates origi-

nal sin. Social evolution will culminate in full religious and social equality for all humanity. This religio-social utopia, which Ballanche believes to be close at hand, will mark the completion of the terrestrial phase of the rehabilitation of humanity from the Fall.³⁸ Ballanche worked out his theory of salvation within and by means of the social order in response to the cataclysmic event of his generation, the French Revolution.³⁹ Once in possession of the law governing history Ballanche discerned it in all the ancient cosmogonies under which primitive revelation was transmitted through initiation.

While rehabilitation from the Fall is achieved by means of social evolution Ballanche in no way supposes that the historical process effects a change in human nature: "the human race is one and identical to itself from its origin to the present; it will be so until the end. Its faculties are in no way successive. That which it is, it has always been, it will always be".⁴⁰ Humanity, in short, consists of a single essence that unfolds over time: "the human essence does not need to detach itself from an inferior essence in order to become its true self; the evolution of the human race is contained within itself".⁴¹ Like Bonald and Fabre d'Olivet, Ballanche holds that one must know the metaphysical truths of the origin and end of humanity before one can understand history as the unfolding of the human essence. By insisting that history is fully intelligible only in light of the law of social palingenesis Ballanche subordinates the empirical data of history to an *a priori* structure. Ballanche's works, in which philosophy of history and the symbolic intuition of poets harmonize because both perceive the same divine order through the mediation of material forms, make explicit the relation between Romantic philosophy of history and Romantic poetics.

Ballanche's philosophy of history encompasses the history of religions. The mythologies and religions of the ancient world are variations on an ideal, universal mythology, which is itself nothing other than an allegorized account of the operation of social palingenesis in humanity's remote past.⁴² The Saturn-Jupiter-Bacchus sequence of divinities in classical mythology, for example, corresponds to the sequence of social orders actually undergone in ancient history.⁴³ Re-

vealed religion, in turn, continues the process of the unfolding of social palingenesis. Ballanche declares that the Christian doctrines of religious equality and charity mark an epochal transition in the historical process because they make religious truth the potential possession of all humanity and substitute cooperation for violence as the agent of social change. The gradual extension of these religious principles into the civil sphere is the ongoing task of the centuries after Christ.⁴⁴

Christianity, however, is not something totally new in the world. In accord with his understanding of development as the unfolding of a preexistent essence Ballanche identifies Christianity as the fully evolved form of the universal religion that has been unfolding since earliest times: "we will discover later that only Christianity can procure for us this full emancipation, object of so many desires, hidden in the depths of so many general beliefs; hence, once again, Christianity is the true religion of humanity".⁴⁵ Christianity is the religion of humanity because by it humanity is able to achieve the full development of its nature. While historical Christianity fully manifested true religion (the principle of religious equality) for the first time its content was already known in Antiquity because it was contained in the primitive revelation transmitted in the ancient cosmogonies. Hence, those initiated into the ancient cults possessed knowledge of the spiritual truths of the nature and end of humanity, including the providential law governing history. Ballanche's history of religions continues Bonald's historicization of the typological approach to pagan myth, but pushes it into heterodoxy. Since the social evolutionary work of rehabilitation occurs within the historical process Christ's pagan analogues do not merely point to Christ, they actively commence the work of rehabilitation; the process of redemption begins before the manifestation of the archetype.

Ballanche carefully distinguishes between the religions of the ancient world and what he calls "the general traditions of the human race". The general traditions preserve and transmit the memory of what God intended humanity to be and guide its rehabilitation by providing the peoples of the world with the truth necessary to each stage of their development and in a form relative to their capacities.⁴⁶

Ballanche presents the general traditions as the true natural religion: "I understand here faith in an extended sense, soaring above all the religions and referring only to what I call the general traditions, the universal religion of the human race".⁴⁷ His critique of Enlightenment conceptions of natural religion could have come from Bonald's pen: they fail to perceive that revelation is the foundation of religion and society.⁴⁸ The religions of the ancient world arose when the general traditions were modified by local conditions. Though they are thus corruptions of the general traditions all religions contain some reflection of divine truth because the traditions have been obscured over time but never entirely perverted.⁴⁹ Even false dogmas, such as metempsychosis, are merely disfigured truths.⁵⁰ *Institutions sociales*, in which Ballanche describes Greek polytheism as "the absolute empire of the imagination"⁵¹ and laments the harm done to true religion by stories of the gods' dissolute behaviour, bears traces of Bonald's critique of the imagination as the source of polytheism. Yet, more commonly, Ballanche maintains that all myths are allegories that, correctly interpreted, yield truth.⁵² This contradiction, which arises from his amalgam of Traditionalism and Illuminism, disappears in the works of *Palingénésie sociale*, in which "the mysteries of Christianity are hidden in all cosmogonies".⁵³ Conversely, the general traditions comprise a *christianisme antérieur*.⁵⁴

Ferdinand d'Eckstein

Eckstein was born in Copenhagen into a merchant family newly converted from Judaism to Lutheranism. He studied at the University of Heidelberg, where he absorbed the German historico-symbolic approach to the history of religions directly from Friedrich Creutzer himself, learned Sanskrit, and generally threw himself into the Oriental Renaissance. In Rome in 1809 Eckstein converted to Catholicism under the influence of Friedrich Schlegel, whom he had met there and who reenforced the sense of the importance of history and philology for religious reflection that he had already acquired from Creutzer. Eckstein arrived in France in 1816 as an administrator in the service of the King of Austria in the aftermath of the defeat of Napoleon. He

soon abandoned administrative work, having become convinced that he had a mission to provide Catholicism with a philosophy of history. Eckstein settled in Paris in 1818 and henceforth devoted himself to scholarship. From 1819 to 1822 he studied the collection of Indic manuscripts at the Bibliothèque Nationale in the hopes of extracting the content of the primitive revelation from what he considered the most ancient language of Antiquity. From 1823 onwards Eckstein published extensively in both scholarly and popular periodicals. His passionate advocacy of the religions and languages of India earned him the nickname “baron Sanskrit”.⁵⁵

From January 1826 to December 1829 Eckstein published his own journal, *Le Catholique*, modeled on J.J. von Görres’ *Katholik*, as a showcase for the preliminary studies of what was to be his great work — never written — on the world’s religions. Eckstein admired and promoted in *Le Catholique* the Traditionalist history of religions.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, he considered the work of Bonald and his followers (notably Lamennais and Augustin Bonnetty) to be inadequate because their dependence on historical records left uninvestigated most peoples of the world, above all those of remotest times. Happily, Eckstein announces, new methods capable of exploring the fullness of history — linguistics, philology, and mythography — have been developed in Germany.⁵⁷ *Le Catholique*, in fact, synthesizes the historico-symbolic history of religions of Eckstein’s German teachers and the Catholic Traditionalism he encountered in France.

Eckstein published numerous studies in *Le Catholique* demonstrating the existence of a universal primitive revelation, or natural religion, by which God revealed to early humanity religious truths: “Our point of departure is a *primitive revelation*, basis of *natural religion*. By natural religion... we understand a real and positive manifestation of Divinity in which it reveals itself to primitive humanity as creator of the heavens and the earth, in which it unveils the mysteries of Genesis, and at the same time the more hidden mysteries of the divine nature...”.⁵⁸ This natural religion included anticipation of a saviour: “There is joined to it the expectation of a Saviour of the world who will rehabilitate fallen and corrupted humanity”.⁵⁹ From the postulate

of primitive revelation Eckstein establishes the now familiar corollary of the unity of religions: "A single revelation embraced the entire human race; idolatry corrupted it without extinguishing it. That is what India, China, Persia, Egypt teach us: the holy truth finds itself strengthened [by evidence] from all places".⁶⁰ So fundamental is the principle of unity to Eckstein's thought that he enshrined it as the subtitle of *Le Catholique*: "A periodical in which the universality of human knowledge is treated from the point of view of the unity of doctrine".⁶¹

Unity of doctrine, however, does not exclude development. *Le Catholique* contains a history of religions because, on the organic model of development taken over from Traditionalism, natural religion unfolds according to a preexistent pattern: "From this universal identity of religions it follows that humanity is *one*, that knowledge is *one*, that there is only a single history of humanity, only a single development of it is possible...".⁶² Natural religion, despite degenerating at times into idolatry and paganism,⁶³ develops through Judaism to its fulfilment in Christianity, "the perfect belief in the incarnation of the divine Word, by which the human race recovers its heavenly fortress. Christianity is a truly *human* philosophy".⁶⁴ Christianity confirms and fulfils primitive revelation's promise that the human race will rise from the Fall by the expiatory sacrifice of the Messiah.⁶⁵

For Eckstein, as for Bonald and Ballanche, organic developmentalism implies that Christianity merely unfolds what was already present in the religions of Antiquity: "Since Catholicism is the truth, it must be the eternal truth and, as such, it must be eternally revealed. It is said with reason that it is as old as the world. In fact, it is the primitively revealed religion; it is the natural religion, founded on the principle of the revelation of God in the universe and in the human race".⁶⁶ Since Christianity participates in primitive wisdom as its highest expression Eckstein argues that the ancient religions are compatible with — indeed essentially identical to — Christianity: "Is it not known that there exists in all primitive beliefs, no matter how degenerated they may be, and particularly in Asiatic doctrines, near-

est to the cradle of the human race, a foundation of truths revealed by tradition that may be called *pre-Catholic Catholicism?*".⁶⁷ Three years later, and in the meantime having become friendly with Ballanche, Eckstein borrowed his new friend's term to underscore the unity of religions: "One must excavate in the antiquities of paganism in order to recover there this *anterior Christianity*, this Christianity that is not yet fulfilled but that exists in hope and works itself deeply into the destinies of ancient nations".⁶⁸ Eckstein's elision of Ballanche's distinction between the general traditions and the positive religions of Antiquity permits him to use the principle of religious unity to glorify the religions of India as participating in truth, whereas Bonald had used the same principle to glorify Catholicism as the source of all truth. This bold inversion opened Eckstein to charges of "Indo-Christianity" both from outraged Catholics and from philologists and Protestants who accused him of attempting to reestablish theological doctrine under the guise of scholarship.⁶⁹

The Structure of French Romantic Histories of Religions

French Romantic histories of religion, while not identical, are built on the common structural elements of an essentialist ontology, an epistemology that eludes Kantian pessimism, and a philosophy of history that depicts development as the unfolding of a preexistent essence according to a determined pattern.

The ontological Absolute of Bonald, Ballanche, and Eckstein is the God of Christian orthodoxy; for Fabre d'Olivet it is the emanationist Divinity of Boehmian theosophy.

Romanticism's epistemological signature is its refusal to accept the Kantian disjunction between the phenomenal and noumenal worlds. Romantics claim to grasp, directly or meditatively, the ontological Absolute through primitive revelation and/or an intuitive faculty (imagination or a reconceptualized reason).⁷⁰ Bonald's attribution of a negative efficacy to the imagination runs counter to its privileged epistemological function for Illuminists and Romantics.⁷¹ Bonald here shows his continuity with the classicism of the eighteenth century,

for which, equally in its freethinking, Deist, and orthodox Christian guises, imagination corrupts the true light of reason.⁷² Primitive revelation serves for Catholic Traditionalists the epistemological function that the imagination does for Illuminists and Romantics. Fabre d'Olivet's epistemology is the *imaginatio* of the Boehmist tradition, reconceptualized as philosophical intuition in response to Kant. The disagreement between Fabre d'Olivet and Bonald over innate ideas is a consequence of the contradiction between Illuminist emanationist and Traditionalist *ex nihilo* doctrines of creation. For Fabre d'Olivet innate ideas exist because, and are a sign, of our ontological participation in Divinity. Bonald's denial of innate ideas, originally directed against Enlightenment rationalism, derives from his insistence that the absolute ontological distinction between God and humanity demands that all human knowledge of spiritual truth come externally from revelation. Ballanche, who rejects emanationism even though his universe is in many ways the cosmos of correspondences of the Illuminist tradition, asserts that primitive revelation and symbolic imagination are complementary mediations between humanity and the divine order. Eckstein derives knowledge of the divine order by the application of a symbolic hermeneutics to the traces of primitive revelation that survive in the languages and mythologies of Antiquity.

The philosophies of history of our four thinkers are variations on a teleological organic developmentalism in which the preexistent essence of humanity unfolds according to an *a priori* pattern. Bonald depicts the essence of humanity given in primitive revelation as unfolding in history according to a teleological developmentalism analogous to the scholastic correlation of the growth of a seed to its final cause. Eckstein builds on the Catholic Traditionalist elements of primitive revelation and organic developmentalism. Ballanche modifies Traditionalism by insisting on the importance of social institutions and crises for the unfolding of the human essence and by discovering the law governing history in history itself. Fabre d'Olivet interprets history as the unfolding of the metaphysical principles contained in the human essence through the exercise of its

volitive principle. All four philosophies of history, in combining an epistemology that grasps eternal spiritual reality and an organic developmentalism according to which essences unfold over time, express an antinomy basic to Romantic thought: they affirm the existence of eternal ideas while at the same time asserting the meaningfulness of history. These syntheses of traditional faith and historical-mindedness remind us that historicizing thought began not as a move toward secularization but as an attempt to find meaning in history. The great Romantic dream, as Léon Cellier has said, was to spiritualize the idea of progress.⁷³

Consequent upon these structural elements we may identify five characteristics of French Romantic histories of religions.

(1) *Organic developmentalism*. Romantic histories of religions subordinate their empirical data to a teleological organic developmentalism according to which the preexistent essence of humanity unfolds according an *a priori* pattern. They purport to provide empirical corroboration of the metaphysical order underlying history.

(2) *Reductionism*. By interpreting their empirical data in light of a teleological organic developmentalism Romantic histories of religions reduce the multiplicity of religious phenomena empirically encountered in the world to a single, unified transcendent order.⁷⁴ The principle of unity is more important in grasping the nature of Romantic histories of religions than a distinction between Christian and non-Christian. The orthodox Christian history of religions of Bonald, the heterodox histories of religions of Ballanche and Eckstein, and the non-Christian history of religions of Fabre d'Olivet are not irreducibly opposed, as were Catholic, Deist, and *philosophe* versions of comparative religion during the eighteenth century, but, as the web of friendships among their authors attests, parallel approaches grounded on the universality of religious truth guaranteed by the authority of Tradition.⁷⁵

(3) *Hermeneutic of harmonies*. The historicization of figurism, by which pagan religions are read as imperfect but harmonious parallels with the Christian revelation, represents a new kind of analogical hermeneutics. The corresponding idea of an “anterior Christianity”

vastly expanded the corpus of what could be considered sacred texts.⁷⁶ The next generation of Romantic poets, on the model of Ballanche, extended the category of sacred texts to include their own inspired epics of the regeneration of humanity.⁷⁷

(4) *Apologetic intent.* Since all religions are stages in the unfolding of religious truth they point to and confirm the Christian revelation (or theosophy, in the case of Fabre d'Olivet) as the full expression of that truth. Enlightenment critics, inverting the early modern practice of explaining parallels between the Bible and mythologies as evidence that the latter originated as plagiarism of the former,⁷⁸ used comparative religion to attack the uniqueness and authority of Christianity by showing that other religions teach the Christian doctrines.⁷⁹ The orthodox late eighteenth-century reaction to these attacks defended revealed Christianity as the sole true religion and condemned all other religions as false since they did not know the true God.⁸⁰ This defense of Christianity corresponds to the Cartesian theology dominant in French seminaries at the time. Romantic histories of religions combat both Enlightenment critics of Christianity and the Cartesian rationalism of the theologians by reconceptualizing natural religion as primitive revelation and substituting the idea of development for degeneration and/or corruption as the explanation for both the multiplicity and the similarity of the world's religions (although degeneration and corruption are retained to explain paganisms that are judged to fall outside the line of development). The shift from eighteenth-century philosophic syncretism to Romantic histories of religions, made possible by the revolution in historical-mindedness, revalorizes Christianity as true religion while accounting for parallels with other religions.

(5) *Reconceptualization of Christian doctrine.* Romantic histories of religions reconceptualize, in the context of early nineteenth-century intellectual, social, and political life, the Christian doctrines of revelation, providence, theodicy, eschatology, and soteriology. Romantic histories of religions are at once a chapter in the history of the study of religion and in the history of religious thought.

Impact of French Romantic Histories of Religions

French Romantic histories of religions, built as they are on the structural elements of an essentialist ontology, an epistemology that eludes Kantian pessimism, and a philosophy of history that depicts development as the unfolding of a preexistent essence according to a determined pattern, are part of the Romantic quest for alternatives to Enlightenment empiricism and rationalism. As such, they correspond to German Romantic approaches to the study of religion, most notably the philosophies of religion of F.W.J. von Schelling and Friedrich Schleiermacher and the histories of religions of Schelling and Friedrich Creutzer. Neo-Romanticism has been a powerful current within twentieth-century study of religion. And yet we must allow that the neo-Romanticism of Nathan Söderblom, Rudolf Otto, Friedrich Heiler, Gerardus van der Leeuw, William Brede Kristensen, Paul Tillich, and others is primarily indebted to the German Romantics and to the philosophy of religion. For the impact of the French Romantic histories of religions discussed in this article we must look to the fortunes of the concept of Tradition.

Bonald's Catholic Traditionalist history of religions was taken up by Félicité de Lamennais (1782-1854). Lamennais devoted the third and fourth volumes of his widely read *Essai sur l'indifférence en matière de religion* (1817-1823) to compiling historical evidence for the existence of a primitive revelation and its transmission through the ages. Following Lamennais' lead, the disciples and friends who formed the Mennaisian movement published numerous works demonstrating the universality of the Catholic revelation. Notable among these is *Des Doctrines philosophiques sur la certitude* (1826) of the abbé Philippe Gerbet.

Eckstein's *Le Catholique* ceased publication shortly before the July Revolution of 1830, just as Lamennais was abandoning Catholic Traditionalism for a liberal Catholicism. In the years that followed Eckstein passed into obscurity while Lamennais' increasing radicalism lost him his group of followers and eventually carried him outside the Church altogether. Nevertheless, the cessation of *Le Catholique*

and the dissolution of the Mennaisian movement did not spell the end of Catholic Traditionalist history of religions. That this was so is largely the result of the activity of the lay Catholic, Augustin Bonnetty (1798-1879). Under the inspiration of both the early Lamennais and Eckstein Bonnetty founded in 1830 the *Annales de philosophie chrétienne*. This journal, which lasted into the twentieth century, indefatigably compiled evidence from the latest discoveries of the historical sciences for a primitive revelation identical in content to Christianity. Its articles on the history of religions were presented under the rubrics of "Traditions" and "Traditions primitives". Catholic Traditionalist history of religions declined with the rise of Neo-Thomism and the concomitant criticism of Traditionalism within the Catholic Church. It was formally condemned in 1870.

Another trajectory of the concept of Tradition in the nineteenth century is religious humanitarianism. In the 1830s and 1840s French thinkers such as Pierre Leroux (1797-1891) and Edgar Quinet (1803-1875) developed Ballanche's fusion of traditionalism and social progress in a manner that gave pride of place to humanity and this life. Leroux's and Quinet's religious humanitarianisms reject original sin, the divine origin of Christianity, and the expectation of a spiritual afterlife, while retaining the ideas of the preexistence of souls, life as a series of expiations, terrestrial progress as both social and spiritual, the successive unfolding of a single revelation, and the value of ancient traditions. Just as Ballanche's philosophy of history contained a history of religions, so these religious humanitarianisms contain histories of religions (although Quinet is more explicit about this than Leroux) predicated on the idea that humanity, in the course of its intellectual, social, and spiritual development, supersedes outworn religions. Quinet dramatised this idea in his 1833 prose epic, *Ahasvérus*, before presenting it in a 1839 course of lectures, dedicated to Ballanche, on the history of religions. The lectures were published as *Le Génie des religions* (1841).

Fabre d'Olivet's direct influence on the study of religion is negligible, but he represents an important stage in the development of the perennialist version of the Traditionalist approach to the study of

religion. The comparative religions work of twentieth-century perennialists such as René Guénon, Frithjof Schuon, Huston Smith, and Seyyed Hossein Nasr is organized around the concept of an esoteric Tradition. There is a *sophia perennis* — of superhuman origin, not invented by humanity but received — that lies imperfectly recognized at the centre of all religions and gives them whatever truth they possess. Depending on the temperament of the specific perennialist in question, all or some of the world's exoteric religions are praised as access ports, or condemned as obstacles, to the esoteric *sophia perennis*. The standard of comparison among the exoteric religions is fidelity or transparency to this esoteric Tradition. In contrast to Romantic versions of traditionalism, twentieth-century perennialism is anti-evolutionary; hence, it practices comparative religion in the manner of Renaissance and Baroque *prisca theologians* such as Athanasius Kircher in place of history of religions in the manner of Fabre d'Olivet. The rejection of evolution on the part of twentieth-century perennialists reflects the post-Romantic transformation of historical analysis into a scientific, secular discipline. Fabre d'Olivet, and Illuminism generally, nevertheless transmitted the idea of an esoteric Tradition into the modern period.

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¹ On the complications of defining "French Romanticism", see D.G. Charlton, "The French Romantic Movement" in *The French Romantics*, 2 vols, ed. D.G. Charlton (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984), 9-21.

² On Bonald, see Jacques Godechot, *The Counter-Revolution: Doctrine and Action 1789-1804* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1971), 96-102; Bernard M.G. Reardon, *Liberalism and Tradition: Aspects of Catholic Thought in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1975), 43-53; and Gérard Gengembre, *La Contra-Révolution ou l'histoire désespérante* (Paris: Imago, 1989).

³ Bonald, *Législation primitive considérée dans les derniers temps par les seules lumières de la raison* (1802) in *Oeuvres complètes*, 3 vols. (Paris: Migne, 1859), 1:1175-1176.

⁴ Availing himself of the characteristic and fundamental Traditionalist equation of universality with truth, Bonald asserts that the ubiquity of the sentiments of God and the immortality of the soul proves the existence of their objects. Bonald, *Théorie du pouvoir politique et religieuse dans la société, démontrée par raisonnement et par l'histoire* (1796) in *Oeuvres complètes*, 3 vols. (Paris: Migne, 1859), 1:457.

⁵ Bonald, *Législation primitive* in *Oeuvres complètes* 1:1126. "Nature vient de naître, natura, de nasci: un être naît pour une fin, et avec les moyens d'y parvenir; cette fin et ces moyens composent sa nature."

⁶ Bonald, *Législation primitive* in *Oeuvres complètes* 1:1165, 1171.

⁷ Bonald, *Théorie du pouvoir* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 1:521.

⁸ Bonald, *Législation primitive* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 1:1177.

⁹ Bonald, *Théorie du pouvoir* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 1:482; see also 1:523. "[L]a religion naturelle est le germe de la religion judaïque, et la religion chrétienne ou révélée est le développement, le perfectionnement, l'accomplissement de la religion judaïque."

¹⁰ Bonald, *Législation primitive* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 1:1199-1200. "Ainsi la vérité est, comme l'homme et comme la société, un germe qui se développe par la succession des temps et des hommes, toujours ancienne dans son commencement, toujours nouvelle dans ses développements successifs."

¹¹ George Boas, *French Philosophies of the Romantic Period* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1925), 73.

¹² Bonald, *Législation primitive* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 1:1233. "Toutes les croyances propres au christianisme, et toutes les pratiques de son culte, dérivant de la connaissance du médiateur, étaient implicitement contenues dans la religion patriarchale, où le médiateur était annoncé, et elles étaient figurées dans la religion judaïque, où le médiateur était attendu."

¹³ On French Romantic uses of figurism, see Frank Paul Bowman, "The Theory of Harmonies" in *French Romanticism: Intertextual and Interdisciplinary Readings* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1990), 125-154, esp. 130-135.

¹⁴ The basic study is Léon Cellier, *Fabre d'Olivet. Contribution à l'étude des aspects religieux du romantisme* (Paris: Nizet, 1953).

¹⁵ In the esoteric tradition "intellectual" refers to a supra-rational faculty in which the dualities of discursive thought are transcended in a unity. The corresponding knowledge is often designated as "gnosis".

¹⁶ Pierre Deghaye, "Jacob Boehme and His Followers" in Antoine Faivre and Jacob Needleman, eds., *Modern Esoteric Spirituality* (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 214-229; Antoine Faivre, *Access to Western Esotericism* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994), 10-13.

¹⁷ Fabre d'Olivet, *Histoire philosophique du genre humain*, 2 vols. (Paris: 1824; reprinted Paris: L'Age d'homme, 1974), 1:22-35; Cellier, *Fabre d'Olivet*, 265, 271.

¹⁸ Fabre d'Olivet, *Les Vers dorés de Pythagore* (Paris: 1813; reprinted Paris: l'Age d'homme, 1978), 304-318.

¹⁹ Fabre d'Olivet's attempt to elude Kant's epistemological pessimism corresponds closely to F.W.J. von Schelling's philosophical notion of a transcendental insight or intuition that communicates with the Pure Actuality of the Godhead. The affinity is less surprising once we recall the immense influence on Schelling's later thought of Boehmian theosophy via Friedrich Christoph Oetinger and Franz von Baader. Cf. also Samuel Taylor Coleridge's distinction (itself inspired by Schelling) between understanding and reason.

²⁰ Fabre d'Olivet, *Histoire philosophique*, 1:46-48.

²¹ Fabre d'Olivet, *La Langue hébraïque restituée et la véritable sens de mots hébreux rétabli et prouvé par leur analyse radicale*, 2 vols. (Paris: 1815-1816; reprinted Lausanne: l'Age d'homme, 1975), 2:202. "C'est par sa faculté volitive efficiente, émanée de son principe, que tout être se conforme à l'extérieur. Les naturalistes qui ont prétendu que le tigre était tigre, parce qu'il avait des dents, des griffes, un estomac, des boyaux, conformés d'une telle manière ont parlé légèrement et sans science.... Le tigre a ces dents, ces griffes, cet estomac, ces boyaux parce qu'il est tigre; c'est-à-dire parce que sa faculté volitive efficiente le constitue tel."

²² Fabre d'Olivet, *Histoire philosophique*, 1:88. "[L']homme est un germe divin qui se développe par la réaction de ses sens. Tout est inné en lui."

²³ Fabre d'Olivet outlined the teachings of his sect in *La Vrai Maçonnerie et la Céleste culture* (first published in 1953, éd. Léon Cellier [Grenoble: Presses universitaires françaises]). See Cellier, *Fabre d'Olivet*, 312-321.

²⁴ Cellier, *Fabre d'Olivet*, 154-155.

²⁵ Fabre d'Olivet, *Histoire philosophique*, 1:44. "Il est à la fois ridicule et odieux de prétendre lui tracer une route sans être parfaitement instruite du lieu d'où il part, du but où il tend, et de l'objet de son voyage."

²⁶ Fabre d'Olivet, *Vers dorés de Pythagore*, 356-361.

²⁷ Fabre d'Olivet, *Vers dorés de Pythagore*, 361-366.

²⁸ Fabre d'Olivet, *Vers dorés de Pythagore*, 366-368.

²⁹ Fabre d'Olivet, *Histoire philosophique du genre humain*, 1:3-4. "...l'existence d'une grande Unité, source éternelle d'où tout découle".

³⁰ Fabre d'Olivet, *Histoire philosophique du genre humain*, 2:400-409.

³¹ See the summary in Cellier, *Fabre d'Olivet*, 277-284.

³² Cellier, *Fabre d'Olivet*, 273.

³³ See Pierre Albouy, *La Crédit mythologique chez Victor Hugo* (Paris: J. Corti, 1985), 38.

³⁴ On Ballanche, see Arthur McCalla, *A Romantic Historiography: The Philosophy of History of Pierre-Simon Ballanche* (Leiden, Boston & Köln: E.J. Brill, 1998).

³⁵ Ballanche, *Essais de Palingénésie sociale: Orphée* (1829) in *Oeuvres complètes*, 6 vols. (Paris: 1833; reprinted Genève: Slatkine, 1967), 6:82-83.

³⁶ See Jerome J. McGann, *The Romantic Ideology: A Critical Investigation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 100-101. On Ballanche's poetics, see A.J.L. Busst, "Ballanche et le poète voyant" in *Romantisme* 4 (1972): 84-101 and Paul Bénichou, *Le Sacré de l'écrivain* (Paris: J. Corti, 2nd ed. 1985), 164-166.

³⁷ Ballanche, *Institutions sociales* (1818) in *Oeuvres complètes*, 2:45.

³⁸ Ballanche, *Essais de Palingénésie sociale: Prolégomènes* (1827) in *Oeuvres complètes*, 4:55, 123.

³⁹ Ballanche, *Prolégomènes* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 4:179-180.

⁴⁰ Ballanche, *Prolégomènes* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 4:386-387. "Ainsi le genre humain est un et identique à lui-même depuis son origine jusqu'à la fin. Ses facultés ne sont point successives. Ce qu'il est, il l'a toujours été, il le sera toujours."

⁴¹ Ballanche, *Prolégomènes* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 4:387. "Ainsi l'essence humaine n'a besoin de se dégager d'une essence inférieure, pour parvenir à être ce qu'elle est: l'évolution de la race humaine est en elle-même."

⁴² Ballanche, *Orphée* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 5:5.

⁴³ Ballanche, *Orphée* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 5:153-154.

⁴⁴ Ballanche, *Prolégomènes* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 4:63-65.

⁴⁵ Ballanche, *Prolégomènes* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 4:184-185. "Cette pleine émanicipation, objet de tant de voeux, cachées au fond de tant de croyances générales, nous trouverons plus tard que le christianisme seul peut nous la procurer, et que dès-lors, encore une fois, le christianisme est la véritable religion de l'humanité."

⁴⁶ Ballanche, *Orphée* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 6:146.

⁴⁷ Ballanche, *Prolégomènes* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 4:368. "[J']entends ici la foi dans un sens étendu, planant au-dessus de toutes les religions, pour ne s'appliquer qu'à ce que j'appelle les traditions générales, la religion universelle du genre humain".

⁴⁸ Ballanche, *Prolégomènes* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 4:368-369.

⁴⁹ Ballanche, *Prolégomènes* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 4:114.

⁵⁰ Ballanche, *Prolégomènes* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 4:329.

⁵¹ Ballanche, *Institutions sociales* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 2:181.

⁵² For example, *Institutions sociales* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 2:282.

⁵³ Ballanche, *Orphée* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 5:185. "Les mystères du christianisme sont cachés dans toutes les cosmogonies". See also *Prolégomènes* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 4:155.

⁵⁴ Ballanche, *Orphée* in *Oeuvres complètes*, 6:60, 268, 280.

⁵⁵ The basic source for Eckstein is Nicolas Burtin, *Un semeur des idées au temps de la restauration: Le baron d'Eckstein* (Paris: Boccard, 1931). See also Raymond Schwab, *The Oriental Renaissance: Europe's Rediscovery of India and the East, 1680-1860*, trans. Gene Patterson-Black and Victor Reinking (New York: Columbia UP, 1984), 259-273 and Jean-René Derré, *Lamennais, ses amis et le mouvement des idées à l'époque romantique, 1824-1834* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1962), 115-167.

⁵⁶ Eckstein, *Le Catholique* 1 (1826): 8, quoted in Burtin, *Un semeur des idées*, 224.

⁵⁷ See the passages from *Le Catholique* gathered in Burtin, *Un semeur des idées*, 230-235.

⁵⁸ Eckstein, *Le Catholique* 4 (1826): 558, quoted in Burtin, *Un semeur des idées*, 238. “Notre point de départ est une *révélation primitive*, fondement de la *religion naturelle*. Par religion naturelle... nous entendons une manifestation réelle et positive de la Divinité, se montrant à l’homme primitif comme créatrice du ciel et de la terre, alors qu’elle lui dévoile les mystères de la Genèse, et en même temps les mystères plus cachés de la nature divine...”.

⁵⁹ Eckstein, *Le Catholique* 13 (1829): 444, quoted in Burtin, *Un semeur des idées*, 239. “Il y a une révélation primitive, une religion patriarcale, une religion de la nature. Il s’y est joint l’annonce d’un Sauveur du monde, pour réhabiliter l’humanité déchue et corrompue.”

⁶⁰ Eckstein, *Le Catholique* 9 (1828): 341, quoted in Burtin, *Un semeur des idées*, 240. “Une seule révélation a embrassé tout le genre humain; l’idolâtrie l’a corrompu sans l’étouffer. C’est ce que nous apprendront l’Inde, la Chine, la Perse, l’Egypte: de toutes parts la vérité sainte se trouvera fortifiée.”

⁶¹ “Ouvrage périodique dans lequel on traite de l’universalité des connaissances humaines sous le point de vue de l’unité de doctrine.”

⁶² Eckstein, *Le Catholique* 11 (1828): 137, quoted in Burtin, 239-240. “De cette identité universelle des religions, une conséquence s’impose, c’est que l’humanité est *une*, que la science est *une*, qu’il n’y a qu’une seule histoire de l’humanité, qu’un seul développement lui est possible...”.

⁶³ Eckstein, *Le Catholique* 13 (1829): 444, quoted in Burtin, *Un semeur des idées*, 239.

⁶⁴ Eckstein, *Le Catholique* 4 (1826): 559, quoted in Burtin, *Un semeur des idées*, 239. “...la croyance parfaite à l’incarnation du Verbe divin, par laquelle le genre humain a retrouvé son point d’appui dans le ciel. Le christianisme est une philosophie vraiment humaine.”

⁶⁵ Eckstein, *Le Catholique* 3 (1826): 133, quoted in Burtin, *Un semeur des idées*, 241.

⁶⁶ Eckstein, *Le Catholique* 3 (1826): 133, quoted in Burtin, *Un semeur des idées*, 241. “Le catholicisme étant la vérité, ne peut être la vérité éternelle et, comme telle, il doit être éternellement révélé. On a dit avec raison qu’il était vieux comme le monde. En effet, il est la religion primitivement révélée; il est la religion naturelle, fondée sur le principe de la révélation de Dieu dans l’univers et dans le genre humain.”

⁶⁷ Eckstein, *Le Catholique* 3 (1826): 171, quoted in Burtin, *Un semeur des idées*, 242. “[N]e sait-on pas... qu’il existe dans toutes les croyances primitives, quelques dégénérées qu’elles soient, et particulièrement dans les doctrines asiatiques, les plus

voisines du berceau du genre humain, un fond de vérités révélées de tradition, qu'on pourrait appeler *le catholicisme antérieur au catholicisme?*"

⁶⁸ Eckstein, *Le Catholique* 15 (1829): 183, quoted in Burtin, *Un semeur des idées*, 235. "Il faut donc fouiller dans les antiquités du paganisme pour y retrouver ce christianisme antérieur, ce christianisme non accompli, mais existant en espérance, et s'enlançant profondément dans les destinées des nations anciennes."

⁶⁹ See Schwab, *Oriental Renaissance*, 269-271.

⁷⁰ Among Romantics the distinction between imagination and a reconceptualized reason is often only a matter of words:

... Imagination, which, in truth,
Is but another name for absolute power
And clearest insight, amplitude of mind,
And Reason in her most exalted mood.

William Wordsworth, *The Prelude* (1799-1805), Bk. 14: ll. 189-192.

⁷¹ The literature on epistemological status of the imagination in literary Romanticism is extensive. Fundamental studies include René Wellek, "The Concept of 'Romanticism' in Literary History" in *Comparative Literature* 1 (1949): 147-172 and M.H. Abrams, *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature* (New York: Norton, 1971).

⁷² How was my Heart encrusted by the World?
O how self-fetter'd was my grovelling Soul?
How, like a Worm, was I wrapt round and round
In silken thought, which reptile Fancy spun,
Till darken'd Reason lay quite clouded o'er...

Edward Young, *Night Thoughts* (1742), Bk. 1: ll. 155-159.

⁷³ Cellier, *Fabre d'Olivet*, 403.

⁷⁴ "Reductionistic" is almost invariably used as a derogatory term in much of the literature on religion, where it denotes those sorts of explanations that do not resort to transcendence. Such usage wrongly implies that only the 'reductionists' have explanations for religion, while the antireductionists modestly do not. Such is not the case. Antireductionists, rather, have a *different explanation*." J. Samuel Preus, *Explaining Religion: Criticism and Theory from Bodin to Freud* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1987), ix n.2.

⁷⁵ See Cellier, *Fabre d'Olivet*, 406.

⁷⁶ Bowman, "The Theory of Harmonies" in *French Romanticism*, 127.

⁷⁷ For example, Edgar Quinet, *Ahasvérus* (1833), Alphonse de Lamartine, *La Chute d'un ange* (1838), and Victor Hugo, *La Légende des siècles* (1859-1883). See Herbert J. Hunt, *The Epic in Nineteenth-Century France* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1941).

⁷⁸ See Henri Pinard de la Boullaye, *L'Etude comparée des religions*, 2 vols. (Paris: G. Beauchesne, 1922): 1:176-225.

⁷⁹ For example, Nicolas-Antoine Boulanger, *L'Antiquité dévoilée par ses usages* (1766), Constantin-François de Volney, *Les Ruines des empires* (1791), and Charles-François Dupuis, *L'Origin de tous le cultes, ou Religion universelle* (an III [1795]). See Joscelyn Godwin, *The Theosophical Enlightenment* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994), 33-37.

⁸⁰ See Godwin, *Theosophical Enlightenment*, 37.

CONTRADICTION AND THE MERIT OF GIVING IN INDIAN RELIGIONS

TORKEL BREKKE

Summary

The gift has been an important focus of research on Indian sociology and religion. However, almost all research has been confined to the Hindu tradition. I believe we can shed new light on religious giving if we focus on common themes in the main religions of the sub-continent. In this article I look at the textual traditions on giving in Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. My thesis is that these traditions share basic contradictions in their ideas of giving. There is, firstly, a contradiction between the gift as a sacrifice and a charitable gift and, secondly, a contradiction between the merit associated with giving as originating from the qualitites of the recipient and from the intention of the donor. These two contradictions are interlinked. Initially, they seem to threaten the institution of giving to the religious renouncer. If giving can be perceived as an act of charity where the merit accrues from the right intentions behind the act, there is no more reason to give to the renouncer than to anybody else. However, it seems that the contradiction also has been used to make giving to renouncers *a priori* meritorious. When the gift is perceived as a sacrifice to a worthy monk the merit accrues from the qualities of the recipient, but when there are no worthy recipients around the merit accrues from the right intention of the donor.

Gifts to Brahmins have been the focus of scholarly work on Indian religion, especially in anthropology. The most puzzling character of the gift in an Indian setting is its ambiguity. Several writers have pointed out that the Brahmin is reluctant to receive gifts. Manu has a long list of hells with telling names — “Excessively burning”, “Crushing”, “Iron Spike”, “Forest of Sword Leaves” etc. — that the unlucky Brahmin must visit if he were to accept gifts from the wrong person.¹ The trouble with the gift for the Brahmin is that it forms unwanted bonds of dependency vis-à-vis the king, M. Mauss observed in his classic study.² But it is more to it than that. From the recipient’s point of view the gift is potentially poisonous. The gift contains impurity, according to the writers who followed the Dumontian paradigm.

Heesterman argued that the Brahmin officiant in Vedic times took over the death-impurity of the patron by accepting gifts, but that this role was fundamentally changed through the individualization of the ritual.³ J. Parry says that the Brahmins of Benares become living sewers as they receive the death-impurity of mourners conveyed in the gift.⁴ The poison in the gift is really inauspiciousness (*nāśubh*), says G.G. Raheja in an important challenge to the Dumontian sociology of hierarchy based on impurity (*āśauca*).⁵ Thus, new generations of sociologists and anthropologists showed that Mauss had been unable to account for the uniqueness of the Indian gift because he did not grasp the peculiar metaphysics of impurity or inauspiciousness.

In volume 44 of this journal A. Michaels embarked on a critique of these writers “in an attempt to partially rehabilitate Mauss.”⁶ He wished to question the prominence of theories of impurity by comparing the śāstric theories of giving (*dānadharmā*) with the theories of greetings (*abhvādanadharmā*). Greetings, so his argument went, make bonds of dependency and may convey defilement just like gifts. If it really is the defilement of the gift that makes it so problematic, then similar rules and reservations should have developed for greetings. The fact that they have not — greetings are, on the contrary, always reciprocated — goes to falsify the theory that it is defilement which makes the gift troublesome. Instead, Michaels suggested, the gift is not returned and barely accepted because both recipient and donor strive towards an otherworldly attitude of altruistic generosity which is an ascetic virtue. It is not clear to me, however, that the ascetic spirit with its questioning of earthly possessions, which Michaels sees as the background to religious giving, actually can be ascribed to the most important donors: the merchants, townsmen and common people supporting Brahmins and monks. The householders’ donations do not imply soteriological concerns. On the contrary they are motivated by a desire for merit which is, strictly speaking, a this-worldly currency. Giving away possessions in order to earn merit is a perfectly rational activity. I do believe, however, that Michaels is right in drawing attention away from the metaphysics of the gift and towards the motivational basis for giving. This will also be the

general approach of the present article. Furthermore, I believe, as Michaels also pointed out, that in order to illuminate these aspects of giving we need to devote more attention to non-Brahminical sources.

A very substantial part of what has been written on gifts in Indian religion is exclusively concerned with gifts to Brahmins. I believe that we would get a better understanding of the ideology that surrounds gift-giving in India if we realize that there are common themes contained in the texts — I am primarily concerned with literary traditions — of different religions in the sub-continent. There is a tendency in the research on Indian religion to ignore such common themes. I believe that this tendency is detrimental to our understanding of important topics. Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism have a lot in common. They share a general world-view where ideas of rebirth, *karma*, merit and *mokṣa* are central concepts. For example, as I will discuss later, the idea of merit-making was essentially the same among donors of Hindu, Buddhist and Jain affiliation during the late Gupta period. Many writers seem to be afraid to violate the uniqueness of any one tradition by making general conjectures. Of course, local differences abound and should receive due attention by ethnographers and historians. But the common themes should not be ignored either. Here the historian of religion has an important function in the study of India. By choosing an approach where fundamental ideas are compared across the boundaries of specific religious traditions we may be able to illuminate puzzling issues of scholarship from new angles. Gift-giving is such an issue.

It is already clear, then, that this article is a statement of method in the study of religion as well as an attempt to add to our understanding of the religious gift in India. The thesis I wish to put forward here is that the world-view shared by the traditions of renouncers in India — Brahmins, Buddhists and Jains — contains fundamental contradictions which threaten to surface in the ritual of giving and receiving. As became clear from the brief references to some of the earlier research this general statement is not original. To be more specific, there are two contradictions I wish to discuss here. Firstly, there is a contradiction in how the relationship between the giver and

the recipient is perceived. On the one hand, the gift is seen as a sacrifice and the renouncer has taken the place of the gods on earth. On the other hand, it is seen as a charitable gift and the renouncer is a beggar. Secondly, there is a contradiction concerning the fundamental ethics of giving. On the one hand, the qualities of the recipient are thought to determine the merit of the gift. On the other hand, the intention of the giver is supposed to determine the merit earned. These two contradictions are interlinked. They may threaten to undermine the relationship between the renouncer and the householder. If it is the intention behind the gift that determines its results for the giver there is no reason to distinguish between different types of recipients. Why, then, should anyone give to the renouncer? On the other hand, these contradictions seem to have been used creatively to invest all gifts with merit. When the gift is seen as a sacrifice the excellent qualities of the recipients are in the foreground. When the gift is seen as charity it is the good intentions of the giver which are highlighted. The good qualities of the recipient ensure the merit in an act of sacrifice whereas the bad qualities of the recipient do not affect the merit in an act of charity. Gifts are never in vain if the giver can switch between the two alternative merit-making mechanisms as he pleases.

Gift-giving in Indian religion could be broken down and analysed in at least five parts. This is what the two main Jain traditions tend to do. They distinguish between the recipient (*pātra*), the giver (*dātṛ*), the thing given (*dātavya*, *dravya*), the manner of giving (*dānavidhi*) and the result of giving (*dānaphala*).⁷ I wish to illuminate the relationship between the recipient and the giver. Therefore, I will limit my study to these two factors. I will refrain from going into the metaphysics of the thing given and engage in discussions about whether the giver gives part of himself in the gift and what sort of substance or quality may be conveyed.

My main material will be some central works on giving in Buddhist and Hindu literature: firstly, Pāli Buddhist texts, like the Khandhakas of the Vinaya Piṭakas, the Dakkhināvibhangasutta and the Petavatthu; secondly, the Dharmaśāstras, the Dharmasūtras and the

Anuśāsanaparvan and the Bhagavadgītā of the Mahābhārata; thirdly, I will look at some ideas about giving in Jainism mainly through secondary material. I will also use inscriptions to some extent and draw on relevant ethnographic material. By looking at these texts I only wish to illuminate the contradictions mentioned above and I have no intention of presenting an exhaustive analysis of the vast Indian literature on giving, a survey of which can be found in P.V. Kane's study of the Dharmasāstra literature.

The Giver

Firstly, I will take a brief look at the giver in a Buddhist setting. In theory, the members of the Saṅgha are superior to the lay person in every way and they deserve unconditional respect and support. The lay person's potential power *vis-à-vis* the monks is suggestive of the ambiguous nature of their relationship. The Buddhist literature in Pāli has a number of different accounts that show how lay people have been in a position to influence not only individual decisions of the monks, but the whole structure of the Buddhist Saṅgha.⁸ This power derives from the monks' dependency on the support of the laity. For instance, in the Mahāvagga X there is a story about a monk of Kosambi who is suspended for a certain offence. The monk does not accept his punishment and a group of monks takes his side against the group that has suspended him and a dispute arises in the Saṅgha. There are attempts to solve the dispute within the Saṅgha, and the Buddha is drawn into the problems, but the matter is not settled until the lay-followers of Kosambi also flex their muscles against the Saṅgha. They decide to put pressure on the trouble-making monks by withdrawing all their respect and offerings. From the Pāli literature it is clear that this kind of pressure from lay people had to be taken seriously. When in Mahāvagga I.43 (MV from now) a thief goes forth among the monks, people talk negatively about this.⁹ The Saṅgha is forced to react to the criticism from the laity because they are materially dependent on them. In MV II.2 the monks gather on the fourteenth, fifteenth and eighth days of the half month. People

come up to them to hear *Dhamma* but the monks sit in silence. People get angry and ask how the monks can sit in silence like dumb pigs (*mūgasūkharā*). To meet the negative feedback, the Buddha orders the monks to recite *Dhamma*. In MV I.25 monks go begging wrongly dressed and they are greedy and eat in an unbecoming manner. People react to their bad behaviour, and because of their negative reactions the Buddha allows preceptors. In MV I.32 the monks behave badly when their preceptors go away or die. They are subject to criticism and the Buddha allows teachers in order to meet the criticism. In the MV II monks walk around during all seasons including the rains, trampling down crops and grasses and destroying many little creatures. People react to this and as a consequence the Buddha makes rules for life during the rainy season. This sequence of events is repeated again and again in the Khandhakas with the standard phrase “People looked down upon, criticized, spread it about, saying: ‘How can these recluses, sons of the Sakyans...etc.’”¹⁰ The point is that there appears from the Pāli texts to have been a constant pressure from the laity on the monks to behave according to the rules. The tension between givers and recipients also seems to be a prominent feature of Theravāda Buddhist sociology of modern times. To persistently serve a class of human beings as semi-gods and watch them live in luxury and ease while oneself toils in the fields must lead to ambivalence towards the monks, M. Spiro observed about Buddhism in Burma.¹¹

It is clear that the giver has certain powers *vis-à-vis* the recipients in Indian religions. Communities of renouncers are dependent on the society for their subsistence and the householders or lay people are in a position to withdraw support if the recipient does not satisfy certain criteria. On the other hand, the giver too must have certain qualities. Texts on giving from the Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain traditions emphasize that the person who gives alms must have the correct attitude towards the recipient. The Digambaras have established a set of qualities that should be present in a worthy giver of gifts. These are: faith (*śraddhā*) which means confidence in the results of the donation, devotion (*bhakti*) which means love for the virtues of the recipient,

contentment or joy in giving (*tuṣṭi*), zeal (*sattva*) in giving, disinterestedness or lack of desire for worldly rewards (*lobhaparityāga*), patience (*kṣamā*).¹² The Śvetāmbaras have several different lists of qualities in a giver. Among the qualities given by one such list, in the *Tattvārthabhāṣya*, we find the word *aparibhāvitvā*. This word is from the root *pari-bhū* which carries meanings like *be superior to, subdue, despise* etc. Williams translates *aparibhāvitvā* with *absence of condescension towards the recipient*.¹³ In other words, the giver should have a frame of mind where he does not think of himself as superior to the recipient. The condescension which naturally arises in the charitable donor towards the beggar would undermine the structure of the relationship between monk and lay person if it were allowed to exist and be expressed.

Why does the giver give gifts? Indian religions share a belief in rebirth. When a living being dies, some part of it does not disappear with the physical body, but is reborn in a new state. If one has acquired merit, in Pāli *puñña*, one is reborn as a human being or as a god in a world of gods, *devaloka*. If one has acted badly and not acquired merit, one is reborn as a lower life-form or in a dreadful hell. Therefore, it is important to earn merit. In Buddhist texts there is often said to be three ways of doing this: *dāna*, giving, *sīla*, good conduct and *bhāvanā*, contemplation. Each of these is a *puññakiriya-vatthu*, a thing which leads to merit. Admittedly, the issue of merit is not always explicitly brought out in Buddhist material on giving. S. Paranavitana has collected over 1200 inscriptions in Ceylon made between the 300 B.C. and 100 A.D. registering donations, often of caves, to the Samgha. Here donors give their names and often their relation to a member of the Order. However, no mention is made of the desire to make merit. If they say anything at all about their motivation the donors simply state that they give gifts for the benefit of the Samgha.¹⁴ Respect for and devotion towards the Buddhist Samgha is undoubtedly an important motivational factor. Still, it is reasonable to say that the idea of merit-making is the metaphysical foundation of such donations.

The giver gives in order to acquire merit. Acquiring merit may lead to a favourable rebirth. However, in order to attain salvation in a real sense, one must, firstly, be reborn in the state of a human being, where neither pain nor pleasure is too overwhelming to contemplate salvation, and secondly, follow the right practice. This cannot be done as a householder. The Buddha said: “*Vaccha, there is no householder who, without abandoning the fetter of householdship, on the dissolution of the body has made an end of suffering.*”¹⁵ To attain Nirvāṇa one must first of all become a monk or nun.¹⁶ However, says the Buddha, a very large number of householders have gone to heaven on the dissolution of the body. In the numerous inscriptions recording grants of land to Brahmins during the late fifth century the merit acquired from the gifts are thought to “erect a ladder leading to heaven (*svargasopānapañkti*).”¹⁷ Another standard phrase accompanying grants is that the donation is given for the increase of the merit (*punya*) for mother, father and self and in order to obtain a reward (*phala*) both in this world and in the next.¹⁸ Often grants of land are thought to ensure sixty thousand years in heaven for the giver, but merit is never thought of as leading to complete salvation. Against the ethics of merit and favourable rebirth stands the path of the uncompromising salvation-seeker. Whereas the lay person needs to do good acts, the ascetic aims at doing nothing. The essential question of what *doing nothing* really means is answered in different ways by different religions in India. Through some form of ascetic practice the monk or renouncer can stop the influx or generation of new *karma* and get rid of *karma* which has been accumulated from earlier action. To the ascetic merit is basically no better than demerit because both ties him to *samsāra*. The medieval Jain author Kunda Kunda said: “A gold fetter binds a person as much as an iron one. Similarly good or bad deeds performed bind the soul.”¹⁹

Let us look briefly at some Jain ideals of giving to illuminate the difference between the ethics of the lay person and the ascetic. It has been noted that there is a paradox involved in the way that Jains practice the *dānavrata*, the vow of giving.²⁰ When ostentatiously donating costly gifts, wealthy Jains seem to be breaking the vow

of *aparigraha*, non-attachment to worldly possessions, J. Reynells suggested.²¹ K.R. Norman has picked up this topic and tried to show that no paradox is involved.²² There is no canonical injunction against giving openly, he says. One could also point out that several prominent Jain authors have listed ostentatious giving as the practice of a good layman. As R. Williams has shown, this is the case. In Digambara classifications of giving, *dāna* or *datti*, the concept of *samatātī*, gifts to equals, is one type.²³ According to the medieval Jain teacher Jinasena, the celebrated author of the *Mahāpurāṇa*, *samatātī* is the giving away of gifts such as land, gold, horses, elephants, chariots and daughters to a recipient who is equal to oneself in terms of status and piousness. Another medieval Jain author, Āśādhara, distinguishes between gifts that are made for the sake of one's well-being in a future life and gifts that are made for one's well-being in this life. To the last category belong the flashy gifts such as gold, horses, elephants and daughters.²⁴ The distinctions between almsgiving and ostentatious giving are not clear-cut. There is no reason why an ostentatious act of giving should be less meritorious as long as the giver has the qualities that are required; among which are, admittedly, disinterestedness.²⁵ Hemacandra, who sets the standards for Śvetāmbara śrāvakācāra with his *Yogaśāstra*, also seems to prescribe a certain degree of lavishness. If one does not sow wealth openly and constantly one cannot achieve the right conduct, he says.²⁶ As J.E. Cort has pointed out, it seems that we can get a deeper understanding of Jain giving if we realize that there is an alternative ideological framework that centres on well-being and balanced living in society, including, of course, piousness and almsgiving, rather than isolation and *mokṣa*.²⁷

Giving produces merit for the giver. However, in some Buddhist texts we are told that it is possible to transfer to others the merit which is earned by giving to the Samgha. This is illustrated by the story of Nandā in the Petavatthu. Nandā was the wife of the householder Nandasena who lived in a village not far from Sāvatthī. Nandā was irreligious and disrespectful toward her husband, and when she died, she was reborn as a *petī*, an ugly and suffering ghost. One day

Nandasena meets the ghost who had been his wife in a previous life. At first, the widower does not recognize his beloved behind the terrible appearance of the *petī*, but when she tells him her story, he wishes to lead her home and give her food and clothes and let her see her children. However, Nandā knows that her husband would not be able to help her in a direct way.

“What is given by your hand into mine does not profit me. But as regards the monks, who are abounding in the moral precepts, free from passion, and learned, / Regale them with food and drink and transfer to me the benefit of the gift. Then I shall be happy, blest in the fulfilment of all desires.”²⁸

Nandasena follows his wife’s advice and makes abundant gifts to the monks and transfers the merit to Nandā. As a result she is able to come out of the world of *petas* and join her husband and enjoy food and wear clothes. The practice of merit transference clearly contradicts the Buddhist theory of *karma* which says that an individual is totally responsible for all his acts and must bear their consequences alone. One’s fate after death cannot be influenced by others, according to canonical Buddhism.

It is the same for Hindu cosmology. According to Manu: “A living creature is born alone and alone he dies; he alone reaps the benefits of good deeds and the consequences of bad deeds.”²⁹ Still, we find the practice of merit transference abundantly documented in Hindu sources. We have a large number of inscriptions from the late fifth century or the late Gupta period, collected by J.F. Fleet, recording grants of land to Brahmins. The motivation behind the donations are often explicitly stated and are essentially the same as in Buddhist and Jain sources. One Mahārāja Hastin has recorded a number of grants of land to Brahmins and he always gives the same motivation for doing so: he wishes to increase the merit of himself and of his parents.³⁰ The Mahārāja Jayanātha gives the same reasons for giving grants of land to Brahmins. It is for the increase of his own merit (*svapuṇyābhivṛddhaye*) and for the benefit of the feet of the Lord (Bhagavatpāda), i.e. Viṣṇu. One Dhanyaviṣṇu says that he has built a temple to Viṣṇu the Boar in order to increase the merit of his parents.³¹ One Māṭṛcheṭa says that he has built a stone-temple

to the Sun in order to increase the religious merit of himself and his parents. But religious merit can not only be transferred over one generation. Almost all the records of grants of land to Brahmins state that the merit which is produced by a gift of land is not exclusive to the original donor but is shared by all his predecessors in so far as they do not reclaim the land, in which case they go to hell for an extended period.³²

The Jains have always insisted that acts and their fruits are exclusively the responsibility of the individual. In the words of the tenth century *ācārya* Amitagati: "Except for karma earned for oneself by oneself, no one gives anything to anyone."³³ According to P. Jaini, the Jains have been able to keep out practices that contradict the individual idea of karma such as *śrāddha* and transference of merit.³⁴ Why did the practice creep into Buddhism? It has been suggested that the transference of merit in Theravāda Buddhism was a borrowing from Mahāyāna doctrine where *bodhisattvas* can save others by their enormous store of merit.³⁵ According to R. Gombrich, however, the practice of merit transference originated out of emotional needs to escape the responsibility of orthodox *karma* doctrine. By transferring merit one could improve the situation of dead relatives, and one's own state after death could be influenced in the same way. When dead relatives received merit, they were thought to say *thank you*; *anumodati*. Orthodox writers wished to integrate the practice with the laws of *karma*. They said that in reality no merit was transferred and the dead did not give thanks; they simply rejoiced in the good deed. *Anumodana* meant *rejoicing* not *thanking*.³⁶ However, the orthodox solution does not necessarily destroy all hopes that one can influence the *karma* of others. When one can rejoice in the good deeds of other people to the extent that one is reborn as a god, what does it matter that one cannot *really* give gifts of merit? This seems to be the attitude among many Theravāda Buddhists of today.

The Recipient

The first lay-followers of the Buddha were the two merchants Tri-pusa and Bhallika who chanced to pass by the place where the Buddha

was sitting right after his enlightenment. When Tripusa and Bhallika presented the Buddha with food, it was for *their* welfare, benefit and happiness for a long time (dīrgharātram arthāya hitāya sukhāya) says the *Catuspariṣatsūtra*. Moreover, the Buddha accepted the alms for the welfare of beings (hitāya prāṇinām). When receiving alms, the Saṅgha does the favour of giving the laity the opportunity of earning merit. Under special circumstances, the Saṅgha may refuse to accept the alms of a lay-follower. In Cullavagga V.20 the begging bowl is turned upside down on the lay-follower Licchavi Vaddha, and he is suspended from eating with the Saṅgha. He has lied about the chastity of the venerable Dabba the Mallian and the Buddha decides the proper reaction. It is Ānanda who informs the transgressor about his punishment.³⁷ The Buddha has decreed that if a layfollower is possessed of certain bad qualities, the monks should turn the begging bowl on him, in other words, they shall refuse to accept alms from him. This means that he cannot earn merit, and one can easily imagine that it also means social disgrace. Evidently, the turning upside down of the begging bowl on a layfollower was quite a penalty, for when Ānanda told Vaddha about the decision of the Saṅgha, the poor man fainted and fell on that very spot. Fortunately for the Licchavi, the Buddha allows the monks to turn upright the bowl on a lay-follower.³⁸

The renouncers, whether Hindu, Buddhist or Jain, often seem to be under some sort of obligation to accept the gifts presented to them. In order not to accept there must be some fault in the giver or the gift that makes the giving valueless or harmful. The opportunity to give is at the same time an opportunity to invest in the future for the donor. What is given is thought to increase manyfold either in this life or in the next. In the Hindu Dharmasāstra literature as well as in the Anuśāsanaparvan there is often some sort of association between what is given and what is received later as a result of the gift. If one gives a lamp, one may get good eyesight in the next life; if one gives a pair of sandals, one may get an excellent vehicle for travelling; if one gives food, one will get to eat in the world beyond; if one gives the gift of non-injury to beings, one will enjoy excellent health etc.

Gifts are investments, and their interest rates may be extremely high, if we are to believe Brahmin and monk writers.

But in spite of the obligation to receive gifts, a recurring theme in the behaviour and the ideology of the recipient is an initial unwillingness to accept. Here we touch on the fundamental ambiguity of the institutionalized giving. Marcel Mauss observed:

“The recipient puts himself in a position of dependence vis-à-vis the donor. This is why the Brahmin must not ‘accept’ gifts, and even less solicit them, from the king, and would demean himself if he did anything other than take gifts.”
(Mauss 1993: 59).

For the Brahmin the gift is dangerous to accept, Mauss says, because of the bonds that are established in the gift. The same danger is found in Buddhism and Jainism. The monks do not solicit gifts, they only put themselves in a position where it is convenient to give them food. There is a constant need to maintain the fiction that the Brahmin, the ascetic or the monk is not dependent on the householder and that the asymmetry in the relationship between giver and recipient is the natural thing. The recipient reluctantly accepts what is offered as a favour to the giver. Laidlaw observes that for the Jains the giving to the renouncer does not really take place. By denying that *supatradan*, gift to the good recipient, is a *dan*, the householder frees the renouncer from any dependency.³⁹

We saw that the giver is expected to possess certain qualities. The same is the case for the recipient. In his exposition of the Saṅgha the great Buddhist writer Buddhaghosa explains that a gift is something given with thoughts of the next world.⁴⁰ The wish and the possibility of acquiring merit for the next world by giving to monks is the basis for the institution of almsgiving. The idea of the Buddhist monks and the Saṅgha as a *field of merit* (*puññakkhetta*) is found in a number of Pāli texts, both canonical and post-canonical. In the Pāṭika Suttanta the Buddha says that the Order should be respected and revered and given gifts and homage; it is the world’s unsurpassed field of merit.⁴¹ Likewise, in the Saṅgīti Suttanta the Saṅgha is described as the world’s unsurpassed field of merit.⁴² In the first story of the Petavaṭṭhu the field of merit, embodied in one monk, provides the

opportunity to achieve a good rebirth in a seemingly mechanistic and straightforward manner. Here the elder Moggallāna sees a thief who is about to be executed. In order to save him from rebirth in hell, the monk approaches the thief and accepts a gift of sweetmeat and water from him, and because Moggallāna is an unsurpassed field of merit the thief is reborn in a world of gods. According to the Petavatthu, the Buddha explained how this is possible in the following manner: “Like unto fields are the Arhans; the givers are like unto farmers; resembling seed is the gift; from this is produced fruit.”⁴³ Buddhaghosa explained the meaning of the concept of field of merit in his chapter on the Saṅgha.⁴⁴ He says that the Saṅgha is called *The world's unsurpassed field of merit* because the Saṅgha is a place where the merit of the world can grow. Just as the field where the king or his councillor sows rice or barley is called *the rice or barley field of the king*, in the same way the Saṅgha is a field for the growing of merit. The Jains also have the idea of the Order of monks as a field of merit. According to R. Williams the early Jain author Haribhadra uses the term *kṣetra* in this sense twice in his Dharmabindhu.⁴⁵ The great medieval writer Hemacandra enumerates seven *kṣetras* in which the layman should sow his wealth. These are Jain images, Jain temples, Jain scriptures, monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen.

The lay person can sow deeds in the field of merit, but the quality of the soil determines the harvest. In Theravāda Buddhism the qualities of the recipient of a gift are often said to determine the merit that the gift produces for the donor. For a gift to be efficient in terms of merit, the monks should first of all be of pure conduct. There is also the idea that the *longer* a person has been a monk, the greater is the merit produced from giving him alms. The Cullavagga IV is concerned with questions of purity and dignity of the Saṅgha in the eyes of monks and lay-people. For instance, one story tells about a group of monks who are constantly offered inferior food by householders because they are newly ordained and of little merit. One day these monks go to a meal and the householder giving the meal makes them sit on the porch and gives them only broken rice

and sour gruel. Naturally, the newly ordained monks are not happy about their treatment.

According to the *Dakkhiṇāvibhangasutta* the Buddha distinguished between gifts to individuals and to the *Samgha*.⁴⁶ Gifts to individuals (*pātipuggalikā dakkhiṇā*) are of fourteen types. The first type is to a *Tathāgata* and the last type is to those who have been reborn as animals (*tiracchānagata*). Between these two extremes there are a number of different individuals to which one may donate. Gifts given to those reborn as animals increase a hundredfold, whereas a gift to a *Tathāgata* is meritorious beyond expression. The same hierarchy of recipients and merit are found in modern Burmese Buddhism. The feeding of a hundred dogs is equivalent in merit to feeding one human being, the feeding of one lay person is equivalent to one novice, a hundred novices equals one monk etc.⁴⁷ In the *Dakkhiṇāvibhangasutta* donations to the *Samgha* are of seven types. These are distinguished by three criteria: whether the Buddha is the leader of the *Samgha* or the donation takes place after his death, whether one gives to the whole *Samgha* or only to parts of it, and whether it is given to monks or nuns. Never is a gift to an individual of greater fruit (*mahaphalataram*) than a gift to the *Samgha* as a whole. But, says the same text, gifts can be given by worthy donors to unworthy recipients because the gift is purified or hallowed (*visujjhati*) by the giver (*dāyaka*). Even if a gift is given by an unworthy donor to an unworthy recipient, it is still fruitful, says the Buddha. Here we are at the heart of the ideology of gift-giving. The *Dakkhiṇāvibhangasutta* uses the contradictory ideas of merit-making to show that gifts are meritorious under all circumstances.

In Jainism there have been different opinions on the question, but in general Jains use a fivefold classification of recipients set out by the medieval writers *Amṛtacandra*, *Amitagati*, *Vasunandin* and *Āśādhara*. In their list the best recipient is the Jain ascetic, the next best is a Jain layman who is on his way up the scale of religious realization which at some point ends in monkhood, the least satisfactory recipient is a non-practising layman who has the right belief, a poor recipient is a person of righteous life but without the right belief and the wrong recipient

is a person devoid of both right belief and good conduct.⁴⁸ Another important Jain author, Somadeva, has a list of different recipients based on what aspect of the religion they specialize in. Astrologers and specialists in practical sciences is one type, orators and debaters and writers is another type etc.

A similar hierarchical order of gift and merit is found in Hinduism. Manu says “A gift to a non-priest yields the basic (reward); to someone who says he is a priest, double; to a teacher, a hundred thousand (times); and to one who has crossed to the far shore of the Veda, endless (reward). For a small or great reward for a gift is obtained after death according to the particular qualities and the amount of faith of the recipient.”⁴⁹ This is a basic theme in the Dharmāśāstra literature. The Yajñavalkyasmṛti says that both asceticism (*tapas*) and learning (*vidyā*) must be present for a person to be worthy of a gift. A person who lacks either must not accept donations.⁵⁰ Right learning and right conduct seem to be two general qualities that should be present in the recipient of a gift in Hindu thought. Manu says that a king must ascertain the presence of learning and virtue (*śrutavṛttta*) in an ascetic in his realm. If these qualities are present, the king must protect him in every way, like a father protects a son.⁵¹ When the king has confiscated the property of criminals, he may choose to give it to a Brahmin who is possessed of learning and virtue (*śrutavṛtttopapanna*).⁵² Like the sower who sows seed in barren soil reaps no harvest, so the donor who gives the offering to someone ignorant of the Rg Veda obtains no fruit.⁵³ Manu has long lists of those who are unworthy of offerings.⁵⁴

In the Mahābhārata Bhiṣma tells Yudhiṣṭhira that a priest of the sacrifice (*ṛtvij*), a family priest (*purohita*), a teacher, a disciple, relatives and kinsmen can be considered worthy of worship and honour if they are furnished with learning and virtue (*śrutavṛtttopasamhita*).⁵⁵ Other important qualities in a recipient, according to Bhiṣma, are absence of anger (*akrodha*), truthfulness in words (*satyavacana*), non-injury to beings (*ahimsā*), self-control (*dama*), sincerity (*ārjava*), absence of malice (*adroha*), absence of pride (*nātimāna*), modesty (*hrī*), patience (*titikṣa*), asceticism (*tapas*) and tranquility (*śama*). A person who has these qualities is considered to be the right recipient (*pātra*).⁵⁶ The

quality of *ahimsā* is often said to be a necessary quality of a worthy recipient of gifts in the *Anuśāsanaparvan*. Non-injury to others is associated with one's own health.⁵⁷ Moreover, the accepting of gifts is surrounded by a number of rules. If one accepts gifts without observing these rules, it will have disastrous consequences. "If he does not know the rules regarding the law for accepting material objects, a wise man should not accept (gifts), even if he is fainting with hunger. An ignorant man who goes about accepting gold, land, a horse, a cow, food, clothing, sesame seeds and clarified butter is reduced to ashes, as if he were wood."⁵⁸

Spiro says that the Burmese have reversed the relationship between donor and recipient in that the merit in giving derives from the spiritual qualities of the recipient, not from the qualities of the donor.⁵⁹ As we have seen this is no reversal or innovation, but is an essential aspect of the idea of giving in Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism. Perhaps the most telling examples of this are found in stories in Buddhist literature where thieves and murderers are reborn in heaven because they give gifts to prominent members of the *Saṅgha*.

Sacrifice and Charity

From the above we may conclude that there is a large number of rules pertaining to the giving and the receiving of gifts in Indian religion. But there also emerges a fundamental ambiguity. On the one hand, the gift is a sacrifice and the giver has an obligation to perform it. If the monks or the ascetics, who have taken the place of the gods on earth, refuse to accept the gift, it has negative consequences for the donor. On the other hand, the renouncer is a poor beggar who is completely dependent on the charity of householders. As T. Trautmann has suggested, gifts can be imagined in two fundamentally opposite ways. On the one hand, the gift can be seen as going upwards to superior beings. On the other hand, it can be seen as going downwards to dependants.⁶⁰

The paradigmatic action in the Vedic worldview was the sacrifice, *yajña*. The most important sacrifices were complex and time-consuming. The relationship between the king and the priest, between

the sponsor and the sacrificer, was likewise the paradigmatic social relationship in ancient India. The Purohita functioned as the alter ego of the king in Vedic religion, H. Oldenberg suggested.⁶¹ Through the merit acquired by the correct performance of the Vedic sacrifice the sacrificer made for himself, in addition to worldly benefits, a *loka*, in the Atharvaveda often called a *sukṛtām loka* — the sphere or condition of those who have earned the rewards of well-performed rites — or a *sukṛtasya loka* — the sphere of ritual and religious merit.⁶² The substantive *sukṛtam* denotes the merit, the positive results of the correct performance of the sacrifice. “This idea runs therefore in the ritual sphere of Vedism parallel with — or it is in this sphere the predecessor of — what in later times when the doctrine of transmigration has fully developed is, with a derivative of the same root *kṛ-*, called a man’s good *karman*...”⁶³ Thus, in Vedic religion correct ritual was the means to make merit. This would soon change, however. When the idea of transmigration and repeated death was fully developed the idea of complete release from the cycle of rebirth came to be the ultimate soteriological goal and at the same time the Vedic sacrifice lost its significance. Perhaps around the middle of the first millennium B.C., there took place significant changes in the conception of the sacrifice. The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad attacks the Vedic ideas of ritual. “Deeming sacrifices and gifts as the best, the imbeciles know nothing better.”⁶⁴ However, wise people know, as the Kauśitaki Upaniṣad says, that when one breathes, speech is offered in breath and when one speaks, breath is offered in speech. “It is because they knew this that people in ancient times refrained from offering the daily fire sacrifice.”⁶⁵ The fire of the Vedic sacrifices burns inside the ascetic and it is there that the real sacrifices are performed. The ascetic, *saṃnyāsin*, is one who takes the sacred fire from the hearth and places it within himself. “By placing the sacred fire within himself, a twice born person should adopt the life of mendicancy,” says the Samvartasmṛti.⁶⁶

With the rise of Buddhism and Jainism the real sacrifice came to be the gifts to the order of monks instead of the traditional Brahminical rituals. In the Kūṭadantasutta the Brahmin Kūṭadanta approaches

the Buddha to learn about sacrifices. The Buddha tells him about bloodless sacrifices. Almsgiving and the building of monasteries are much better in terms of merit and easier to perform than the traditional sacrifices of the Brahmins, the Buddha asserts.⁶⁷ This idea is also found in Hindu thought. Manu says “What is offered as an oblation in the mouth of a priest is better than daily fire sacrifices; it is never spilt, dropped or destroyed.”⁶⁸ But how can the giving of food to religious specialists be a substitute for sacrifice to the gods? Marcel Mauss believed that in almsgiving humans have taken the place of the gods. But, as he also observed, the giving of alms has a double nature:

“Alms are the fruits of a moral notion of the gift and of fortune on the one hand, and of a notion of sacrifice, on the other. Generosity is an obligation, because Nemesis avenges the poor and the gods for the superabundance of happiness and wealth of certain people who should rid themselves of it.”⁶⁹

We have moved our focus to another aspect of gift-giving which has been little commented on in connection with Indian religion: charity. This topic is often met with in the Dharmasāstra literature. The Atrismṛti prescribes charity thus: “He who gives food during famine (durbhikṣa); he who gives gold in a prosperous time (subhikṣa); and he who gives water in a forest fares gloriously in the celestial regions.”⁷⁰ The Samvartasmṛti says: “By an intelligent person, seeking his own well-being, these gifts and others should be made specially unto the poor, the blind and other distressed persons.”⁷¹ Giving for charity has a long tradition in Jainism. The practice of giving to the needy regardless of religious and social affiliation is *karunadāna*, the gift of charity. The medieval Digambara writer Vasunandin says that one should give not only to monks, but to the very young and the very old, the blind, the dumb, the deaf, strangers from another land and to the sick.⁷² Āśādhara, another medieval Digambara writer, prescribes the giving of food, water and medicines regardless of faith. The greatest of all medieval Jain authors, Hemacandra, also says that charity should be practiced toward those who have fallen into evil circumstances.⁷³ The *karunadāna* found in Jainism is closely related to another important religious vow of the religion,

the *ahimsāvrata*, the vow of non-violence, and to the *abhayadāna*, the gift of no-fear, which is an important aspect of *ahimsā*. The Yajñavalkyasmṛti lists the gift of no-fear (*abhaya*) among gifts that makes the giver happy (*sukhi bhavet*).⁷⁴ The Hārītasmṛti prescribes the vow of *abhaya*, non-fear, towards all beings for the person who is about to become a *saṃnyāsin*.⁷⁵ The Bṛhaspatismṛti prescribes the protection of life (*jīvarakṣaṇa*). Beauty, prosperity and good health are the fruits of *ahimsā*, it says.⁷⁶

The Dakṣasmṛti says that the nine sacred works are giving food to the manes, the deities, human beings, the poor, helpless, the ascetics, the father, the mother and the preceptor.⁷⁷ In other words, the gods, the ascetics and the poor are all essentially in the same boat because they depend on charity from humans who have wealth to give away. According to Manu, *dānadharma* is divided into sacrifice and charity, it is *aīśikpaūrtika*.⁷⁸ In his commentary on Manu 4.5 Medhātithi says that a gift given through compassion (*karuṇā*) cannot be counted as part of *dānadharma*.⁷⁹ Such remarks suggest that the experts on dharmasāstra had problems with integrating the different strands of thought that came together in the giving of gifts. The blending of ideas of sacrifice and charity can be found throughout the literature on giving. In the beginning of the Anuśāsanaparvan Yudhiṣṭhīra asks Bhīṣma where one finds the greatest fruit; in the sacrifice or the charitable gift. What gives the highest reward; that which is given on the sacrificial platform (*antarvedyām*) or that which is given out of kindness (*anṛśamṣatya* or -ta)? However, Bhīṣma refuses to distinguish between gifts and sacrifices. He says that by doing an act of giving (*dānakarma*), one must think of oneself as performing a sacrifice (*iṣṭa*).⁸⁰ The Āpastamba Dharmasūtra is explicit in its identification of gift-giving and sacrifice:

"This reception of guests is an everlasting (śrauta)-sacrifice (*yajña*) offered by the householder to Prajāpati. The fire in the stomach of the guest (represents) the Āhavaniya, (the sacred fire) in the house of the host represents the Gārhapatya, the fire at which the food for the guest is cooked (represents) the fire used for cooking the sacrificial viands (the Dakṣināgni)."⁸¹

The Āpastamba Dharmasūtra continues with a detailed account of symmetries between the different parts of food-offering and the sacrifices. The different actions during the meal given to a guest have exact parallels in the different actions during the sacrifice, just like the three fires of the sacrifice have their parallels in the fires of the stomach of the guest and the fires in the house of the host.

“Food (offered to guests) which is mixed with milk procures the reward of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice, food mixed with clarified butter procures the reward of an Ukthya, food mixed with honey the reward of an Atirātra, food accompanied by meat the reward of a Dvādaśāha, (food and) water numerous offspring and long life. . . . When he gives food in the morning; at noon and in the evening, (these gifts) are the Savanas (of that sacrifice offered to Prajāpati). When he rises after his guest has risen (to depart), that act represents the Udvatasānyā iṣṭi (of a Vedic sacrifice). When he addresses (the guest) kindly, that kind address (represents) the Dakṣinā. When he follows (his departing guest, his steps represent) the steps of Viṣṇu. When he returns (after having accompanied his guest), that (act represents) the Avabhrtha, (the final bath performed after the completion of a sacrifice.)”⁸²

The sacrifice and the giving of food are identical in terms of merit. The same idea is found in the Vasiṣṭa Dharmasūtra, but here the body of a Brahmin is the sacrificial fire. When food is offered in the mouth of the Brahmin, this is the same as giving the sacrificial victim to the flames. “A Brāhmaṇa is a fire.”⁸³ Again we are given a long list of parallels and symmetries between the gift to a Brahmin and a sacrifice. The body of the Brahmin is the altar, his mouth is the Āhavaniya fire, the fire in his abdomen is the Gārhapatya fire, and the Dakṣināgni is in his navel, the sense organs are sacrificial vessels etc.⁸⁴ Manu also says that the mouth of a priest is the fire in which one should offer sacrifices.⁸⁵ The Anuśāsanaparvan 152.19 says that a Brahmin is a god and the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa says that there are two kinds of gods: those in heaven and the Brahmins. Sacrifice is divided in two: oblations to gods and fees to Brahmins.⁸⁶

The blending of sacrifice and charity is seen in practice in Aśoka’s accounts of his own work for the propagation of *dharma*. In the fifth rock edict of Kalsi Aśoka says that he has established a completely new office in his state; that of the Mahāmātra. The Mahāmātras are

occupied with promoting *dharma* and in charitable work throughout the kingdom.⁸⁷ In a number of rock-inscriptions Aśoka lists support of *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* together with support of the aged and other types of charity, like kindness to slaves and non-injury to animals.⁸⁸ We can also see the blending of these ideas in inscriptions recording grants of land to Brahmins in the Gupta period. One donor says that the wealth (dhana) formerly given to Brahmins is like the remains of offerings to gods (nirmālyā).⁸⁹ For this reason no good and sane man would take such wealth back and we may infer that this is the reason why the discontinuation of a grant is associated with extreme accumulation of demerit.

In conclusion, there are two different strands of ideas connected with the religious gift in Indian religion, both Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. On the one hand giving is sacrifice. The giver is a humble servant whereas the recipient is a god or, in a god's place, an ascetic, who is deserving of gifts and does the devotee a favour by accepting. On the other hand giving is charity. The recipient is a poor beggar who must be kept alive by the wealthy householder.

Merit and Intention

The sacrifice, especially in the Buddhist and Jain ideologies, became the ritual giving to the order of monks or nuns and this giving was essentially the same as charity. It was the intention of the giver that was the important aspect of giving because the intention produced merit. The ethic of intention is prominent in the major Indian religions. The *locus classicus* for this ethic is the Bhagavadgītā where Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna not to worry about his acts as long as his intentions are right. But the Bhagavadgītā does not escape the contradictions inherent in the ideas of giving. On the one hand it emphasizes intention. It applies the ontology of the three *gunas* to both sacrifice and almsgiving and in both activities it is exactly the same qualities that distinguish the *sāttvika* from the *rājasa* and *tāmasa*.⁹⁰ In the sacrifice the desire to taste its fruits is the heart of the matter and, likewise, in giving alms it is the expectation to get something in return which

determines the quality of the act. When something is given in order to repay somebody or in order to enjoy the fruits of the act (*pratyupakārārthaṁ phalam uddiśya vā*) then the act is of *rājasa* quality. On the other hand, however, the Bhagavadgītā sees the sacrifice as the hub of a reciprocal relationship between gods and men. Gods and men sustain one another. In return for sacrifice the gods give the food of one's desire (*iṣṭān bhogān*), while if you enjoy their gifts without giving anything in return you are a simple thief.⁹¹ For the Buddhists the basic causes of *kamma* were greed, hate and delusion; *lobha*, *dosa* and *moha*. "Monks, there are these three originating causes of action. What three? Greed, hate and delusion," says the Buddha.⁹² To free oneself from the entanglements of *karma* one must strike at the mentality of the actor. It is the intentions of the actor which is the motor in the continued production of *karma* and of continued existence. This is also the case with giving. As regards the laity and their wish for a favourable rebirth, it is not the giving of alms in itself which is meritorious and produces fruits, but the intention behind the acts, says the commentator Dhammapāla.⁹³ In Jainism, the nature of *karma* is radically different from that of Buddhism. Still, it is the mentality behind the act that determines its results. For the Jains it is the passions that make the soul receptive to *karma*. The passions — anger, pride, deception and greed became a standard set — work as a kind of glue on the soul to which the substance of karma can stick.⁹⁴ Karmic dust would still be drawn to the soul but would not stick to it were the soul not moistened by the passions.⁹⁵ In the words of the sixth century author Jinabhadra: "For it is the intention which is the deciding factor, not the external act."⁹⁶

But if this were the case, a lay person could theoretically give anything to anyone and earn merit as long as the intention behind the act was right. Why should anyone donate to monks, nuns or Brahmin renouncers when they could earn their merit anywhere else? There were two ways in which the religious specialists could argue that giving to them would be more meritorious than giving to anyone else. Firstly, they could say that there is a quantitative difference between the gift to the religious specialist and any other person. All living

beings would theoretically have a place on a scale of merit where the monk is on the top end. Secondly, they could say that there is a qualitative difference between giving to a religious specialist and to any other being. The first of these two solutions is based on the assumption that there are certain qualities in the recipient which determine the efficiency of the donation. We have seen above that this is a common view in Buddhist Pāli literature and in the ethnographic data on modern Theravāda Buddhism as well as in Hindu Dharmaśāstra literature and medieval Jain texts on giving. The second of the two solutions is based on a fundamental difference in the motivation of the giver. Medhātithi on Manu IV.5 says that the real *dāna* and *prati-graha*, giving and accepting, does not include donations made out of compassion.⁹⁷ J. Gonda has summed up this view thus: "What is given out of pity or sympathy is not, the same authority observes, conducive to transcendental results, because it does not fulfill the conditions of *dāna*."⁹⁸ In Ceylon, R. Gombrich was told by Buddhist monks that there are two kinds of giving: that which is motivated by respect (*gaurava*) and that which is motivated by pity (*anukampāva*). The first variant is exemplified by a gift to the Samgha, the second by a gift to a beggar.⁹⁹ The first, of course, is the best in terms of merit. Among Jains of modern Jaipur the ideas of intention and the qualities of the recipient are mixed up to make a heterogenous list of gifts (*dan*).¹⁰⁰ There are five types of gifts, the Jains say. These are: 1. the gift of fearlessness, 2. a gift to a worthy recipient, 3. a gift given out of compassion, 4. a gift given out of duty, 5. a gift given to earn fame. Laidlaw observes that the classificatory principles that underlie this list are divergent. The most important kind of gift, the gift to a worthy recipient, either a Jain renouncer or an idol, is classified according to the recipient, whereas the three last gifts are classified according to the motivation of the giver. The principles producing merit for the giver are completely different in the two cases. On the one hand there is the quality of the recipient, on the other hand there is the emphasis on intention. We may note that Hemacandra distinguished between gifts motivated by devotion (*bhakti*) and compassion (*dayayā*).¹⁰¹

In practice, both of these solutions contradict the basic assumption that the intention behind the act determines its fruits. Theoretically, perhaps, the second variant could avoid this contradiction by insisting that the fundamental difference of giving to religious specialists on the one hand and giving to any other being on the other arises *only* from the difference in motivation. However, in the cases I have encountered the explanation of the difference always involves references to the qualities of the recipient. The ethic of intention clashes with the theories of merit-making.

I have looked at two sets of ideas about action and retribution which are fundamental to the world-view of Indian religions but which are incompatible. This incompatibility surfaces in the act of almsgiving. On the one hand we have the belief that the intention behind an act of giving determines its merit. On the other hand there is the idea that there is a graded or radical difference in terms of merit between giving to members of a group of religious specialist on one side and to all other beings on the other. The philosophy that classifies recipients according to merit is an ideology serving the interests of the religious specialists. The aspirations to domination of this class rests on this ideology. If people do not believe in the special merit of giving to the renouncers, the renouncer will not receive alms. This has, of course, been clear to monks and Brahmins and they have worked to keep the ideology alive and gloss over its clash with the ethics of intention. By this I do not mean to say that they themselves have not believed in their ideology. Applying the theories of Anthony Giddens we can identify two main ways in which the ideology of the religious specialists gives legitimacy to the social structure of the relevant societies.¹⁰² Firstly, the ideology of the religious specialists represents its sectional interests as universal ones. By assuming a subordinate position and giving the religious specialist alms the giver really serves his own interests according to the teachings of rebirth and merit-making. Secondly, the ideology denies or transmutes the existence of contradiction in their world-view by splitting the interests of the religious specialist and the householder into two different spheres. The householder should try to make merit by giving alms,

whereas merit-making is not in the interest of the religious specialist. Neither is the monk really interested in the wealth bestowed on him by the householder. The values of monkhood and householdership are incommensurable. Consequently, contradictions do not exist and conflict should not arise. As Dumont observed the gift is an exchange of material objects with no real value for spiritual goods.¹⁰³

Conclusion

I started the article by saying that there is a common ideology surrounding the gift in the main religious traditions of India and that we should try to understand this ideology across these traditions. I also said that there is a tendency in the study of Indian religions to shun generalizations across different traditions even though Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism share a fundamental world-view which is sometimes best understood through a comparative approach.

The thesis of the article was that there is a common ideology of the gift in the Hindu, Buddhist and Jain traditions and that this common ideology contains two fundamental contradictions. The first contradiction concerns the imagery of gift-giving. On the one hand, the gift is seen as a sacrifice. On the other hand, it is seen as an act of charity. The second contradiction concerned the motivation for giving. On the one hand, the qualities of the recipient determines the merit achieved by the gift. On the other hand, it is the intention behind the giving which is important. These two contradictions go together. If the giving is seen as a sacrifice, the qualities of the recipient are naturally the focus of attention. If the gift is charity, the intention of the giver comes to the fore. These contradictions may, theoretically at least, undermine the relationship between renouncer and householder. However, it is interesting to note that these contradictions also can be used to interpret all gift-giving in a positive way. In times when there are no worthy recipients the pious layman can earn merit by giving with the right intention, according to Theravāda Buddhist ideology. In the future there will be monks in yellow robes who are of bad conduct (*dussila*) and of evil disposition (*pāpadhammā*) who will be

given gifts for the sake of the *Samgha*, the Buddha says. Even then the gift will be of immeasurable worth.¹⁰⁴ The *Dakkhiṇāvibhangasutta* concludes its exposition of gifts by listing possible combinations of worthy and unworthy donors and recipients. When the worthy donor gives to the unworthy recipient great fruit grows from the act. The giver purifies or hallows the gift (*sā dakkhiṇā dāyakato visujjhati*), it is said. When the unworthy donor gives to the worthy recipient great fruit grows from the act. Now, the recipient purifies the gift (*sā dakkhiṇā paṭiggāhakato visujjhati*). When the unworthy donor gives to the unworthy recipient there is great fruit although the gift is hallowed by neither. We must suppose, then, that it is the act in itself that is meritorious in this case. Finally, when the worthy donor gives to the worthy recipient the donation is, of course, fruitful. The giver always has a choice, it seems, between focusing on the qualitates of the recipient or his or her own right intentions. Giving, then, becomes meritorious *a priori*.

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¹ Manu 4.87-91. Doniger, W. and Smith, Brian K. (1991). *The Laws of Manu*, Middlesex. Penguin, p. 82.

² Mauss, Marcel 1993. *The Gift*. Translated by W.D. Halls. Foreword by Mary Douglas. London.

³ Heesterman, J.C. (1963). "Brahmin, Ritual and Renouncer." *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd- und Ostasiens*, Band 7, 1963, p. 3 and 14-16.

⁴ Parry, J.J. (1994). *Death in Banaras*. Cambridge, p. 123. See also Parry, Jonathan (1986). "The Gift, the Indian Gift and the 'Indian Gift' ". *Man: The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 21.

⁵ Raheja, Gloria Goodwin (1988). *The Poison in the Gift*. Chicago and London.

⁶ Michaels, Axel (1997). "Gift and Return Gift, Greeting and Return Greeting in India. On a Consequential Footnote by Marcel Mauss." *Numen* 44, p. 252.

⁷ Williams, R. 1983. *Jaina Yoga. A Survey of the Mediaeval śrāvakācāras*. Delhi. Motilal BanarsiDass, p. 150. For a different six-fold classification belonging to the Hindu tradition see Kane, vol. 2, part II, p. 843.

⁸ Brekke, Torkel 1997. "The Early Saṅgha and the Laity." *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, forthcoming.

⁹ The term *going forth* is a translation of *Pabbajā*. It is a technical term which refers to the first of the two stages in the admission to the Saṅgha the second stage being the full ordination, *upasampadā*. *Pabbajā* (or *pravrajyā* in Sanskrit) can be used in a more general sense referring to the adoption of the ascetic life.

¹⁰ *manussā ujjhāyanti khyanti vipācenti: kathān hi nāma saṃāna Sakyaputtiyā...*

¹¹ Spiro, M.E. 1984. *Buddhism and Society*. Berkeley and Los Angeles. California University Press, p. 415.

¹² Williams, op.cit., p. 153.

¹³ ibid.

¹⁴ Paranavita, S. (1970). *Archaeological Survey of Ceylon. Inscriptions of Ceylon*, vol. 1, Ceylon.

¹⁵ *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha*. A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya. Bhikkhu Nāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi. Boston, 1995, p. 588-589. *Majjhima Nikāya*, edited by V. Trenckner. Oxford, 1948. Vol. 1, p. 483. The Kathāvatthu agrees that it is impossible to attain salvation as a householder. See *Points of Controversy*. Shwe Zan Aung and Mrs. Rhys Davids. London, 1979, p. 157-158.

¹⁶ Although, according to the Cullavagga X, the Buddha initially refused when his foster-mother, Pajāpatī, asked him to let women obtain the going forth, several passages from other texts testify that women were seen as capable of attaining *Nirvāṇa*. For instance, the nun Saṅghamittā achieved salvation at the age of fifty-nine (Mahāvaṇsa, XX.48ff.) Saṅghamittā was the daughter of Aśoka and the sister of Mahinda. She went to Sri Lanka after her brother, bringing a branch of the Bodhi tree, in order to establish the Order of nuns in the island.

¹⁷ Fleet, J.F. (1888). *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, vol. III, *Inscriptions of the early Gupya Kings and their successors*. Calcutta, pp. 93ff.

¹⁸ ibid., p. 179 and 189.

¹⁹ Shri Acharya Kunda Kunda. *Samayasara*. With translation and commentaries by J.L. Jain. Delhi, 1990, p. 92.

²⁰ Reynell, Josephine (1985). "Renunciation and Ostentation." *Cambridge Anthropology*, vol. 9, no. 3, pp. 20-33.

²¹ ibid.

²² Norman, K.R. (1991). "The role of the layman according to the Jain canon." *The Assembly of Listeners*. Edited by Michael Carrithers and Caroline Humphrey. Cambridge, pp. 31-39.

²³ Williams, R. (1983). *Jaina Yoga. A Survey of the Mediaeval Śrāvakācāras*. Delhi, p. 163ff.

²⁴ ibid.

²⁵ ibid., p. 153.

²⁶ Cort, John E. (1991). "Two Ideals of the śvetāmbar Mūrtipūjak Jain Layman." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 19, pp. 394 and 395 and footnotes 11 and 14.

²⁷ ibid., pp. 391-420.

²⁸ *Petavatthu: Stories of the Departed*. Translated by H.S. Gehman. *The Minor Anthologies of the Pali Canon*. Oxford, 1993, p. 36 (second part).

²⁹ Manu, 4.240. Translated by Wendy Doniger and Brian K. Smith, *The Laws of Manu*, Middlesex 1991, p. 96.

³⁰ mātāpittror ātmaṇaś cha punyābhivṛddhaye. Fleet, J.F. (1888). *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, vol. III, *Inscriptions of the early Gupya Kings and their successors*. Calcutta, pp. 93-112.

³¹ ibid., p. 158-161.

³² A large number of the records of grants of land quote a verse from the Mahābhārata to explain the significance of their gift. Typically they say "And it has been said by Vyāsa, the arranger of the Vedas — The giver of land abides in heaven for sixty thousand years; (but) the confiscator (of a grant), and he who assents (to an act of confiscation), shall dwell for the same number of years in hell! O Yudhiṣṭira, best of kings, carefully preserve land that has previously been given to the twice-born; (verily) the preservation (of a grant) is more meritorious than making a grant! The earth has been enjoyed by many kings, commencing with Sagara; whosoever at any time possesses the earth, to him belongs, at that time, the reward (of this grant that is now made, if he continues it)!"

³³ Quoted in Jaini, P.S. (1980). "Karma and the Problem of Rebirth in Jainism." In *Karma and the Problem of Rebirth in Classical Indian Traditions*. Edited by Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty. Berkeley, p. 235.

³⁴ ibid.

³⁵ Bechert, H. (1992). "Buddha-field and transfer of merit in a Theravāda source." *Indo-Iranian Journal* 35, pp. 95-108. Whether or not Theravāda Buddhism borrowed the idea of transference of merit from Mahāyāna, H. Bechert is right in reminding us that a monk may have followed Mahāyāna teachings while belonging to a Hinayāna school in terms of Vinaya. It is monastical discipline, not philosophy, which makes the important dividing lines between different Buddhist communities. However, that Mahāyānism was suppressed in Ceylon later, is clear from the accounts of the Mahāvāṇsa.

³⁶ Gombrich, Richard (1972). "'Merit transference' in Sinhalese Buddhism: a case study of the interaction between doctrine and practice." *History of Religions*, 11, pp. 203-219.

³⁷ Ānando...Vadḍham Licchavī etad avoca: saṃghena te āvuso Vadḍha patto nikkujjito asambhogo 'si saṃghenā 'ti...

³⁸ anujānāmi bhikkhave imehi aṭṭhah' aṅgehi samannāgatassa upāsakassa pattam ukkujjitum.

- ³⁹ Laidlaw, James (1995). *Riches and Renunciation*. Oxford, p. 316.
- ⁴⁰ Dakkhinā ti pana paralokam saddahitvā dātabbadānam vuccati. *The Visuddhi-Magga of Buddhaghosa*. Edited by C.A.F. Rhys Davids. London, 1920, vol. 1, p. 220.
- ⁴¹ ...anuttaram puñña-kkhettam lokassāti. Dīghā Nikāya xxiv, 1,6. *The Dīgha Nikāya*. Edited by J. Estlin Carpenter. Oxford, 1947. Translation: *Dialogues of the Buddha*, translated by T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, part iii, p. 11.
- ⁴² Dīgha Nikāya xxxiii, 1,11.xiv. Translation vol. 4, p. 219.
- ⁴³ Petavatthu: *Stories of the Departed*. Translated by H.S. Gehman. *The Minor Anthologies of the Pali Canon*. Oxford, 1993, p. 2-3 (second part).
- ⁴⁴ *The Visuddhi-Magga of Buddhaghosa*. Edited by C.A.F. Rhys Davids. London, 1920, vol. 1, p. 220. German translation in *Visuddhi-Magga oder der Weg zur Reinheit*. Übersetzt von Nyanatiloka, Konstanz, 1952, p. 258.
- ⁴⁵ Williams, op.cit., p. 165.
- ⁴⁶ Dakkhināvibhaṅgasutta, Majjhima Nikāya, edited by Lord Chalmers. London, 1951, p. 253ff. Translation: *Further Dialogues of the Buddha*, London, 1927, p. 299ff.
- ⁴⁷ Spiro, op.cit., p. 109.
- ⁴⁸ Williams, op.cit., p. 152.
- ⁴⁹ Manu, 7.85-6. Translated by Wendy Doniger and Brian K. Smith, *The Laws of Manu*, Middlesex 1991.
- ⁵⁰ Yajñavalkyasmṛti 1.200-202.
- ⁵¹ Manu 7.135. Edited by J. Jolly. London, 1887.
- ⁵² Manu 9.245.
- ⁵³ Manu 3.142.
- ⁵⁴ 3.150ff.
- ⁵⁵ Anuśāsanaparvan 37.6.
- ⁵⁶ Anuśāsanaparvan 37.8-9.
- ⁵⁷ ...arogyamahimsayā. Anuśāsanaparvan 57.19.
- ⁵⁸ Manu, 4.187-8, Translated by Wendy Doniger and Brian K. Smith, *The Laws of Manu*, Middlesex 1991, p. 91.
- ⁵⁹ Spiro, op.cit., p. 106-7.
- ⁶⁰ Trautmann, T.R. (1981). *Dravidian kinship*. Cambridge, p. 285.
- ⁶¹ Oldenberg, H. (1894). *Die Religion des Veda*. Berlin, p. 377.
- ⁶² Gonda, J. (1966). *Loka — World and Heaven in the Veda*. Amsterdam, p. 130.
- ⁶³ ibid., p. 125-126.
- ⁶⁴ Mundaka Upaniṣad 1.2.10. Olivelle, p. 270.
- ⁶⁵ Kauśitaki Upaniṣad 2.5. Olivelle, p. 208.
- ⁶⁶ agnimātmani saṃsthāpya dvijah pravrajito bhavet. Samvartasmṛti 102. Edited and translated by Manmath Nath Dutt, New Delhi 1978, p. 344.

⁶⁷ Rhys Davids, vol. II, p. 182.

⁶⁸ Manu 7.84. Translated by Wendy Doniger and Brian K. Smith, *The Laws of Manu*, Middlesex 1991.

⁶⁹ *ibid.*

⁷⁰ Translated in Dutt, p. 325. The English has been slightly shortened by me.

⁷¹ Samvartasmṛti 91, translated in Dutt, p. 343.

⁷² Williams, op.cit., p. 157.

⁷³ *ibid.*

⁷⁴ Yajñavalkyasmṛti with commentary Bālakrīda of Viśvarūpāchārya. Edited by M.T. Ganapati Sastri. New Delhi, 1982, p. 142.

⁷⁵ Hāritasmīti 6.5.

⁷⁶ Br̥haspatismīti 71.

⁷⁷ Dakṣasmīti 3.8-14, Translated in Dutt, p. 443.

⁷⁸ Manu 4.227.

⁷⁹ Kane, vol. 2, part 1, p. 116.

⁸⁰ Anuśāsanaparvan 60.9.

⁸¹ The Āpastamba Dharmasūtra 2.3.7.1-10. *The Sacred Laws of the Āryas*. Translated by Georg Bühler. Delhi, 1965, part II, p. 116-117.

⁸² *ibid.*

⁸³ Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra 30.2. *The Sacred Laws of the Āryas*. Translated by Georg Bühler. Delhi, 1965, part I, p. 138.

⁸⁴ *ibid.*

⁸⁵ Manu 3.98.

⁸⁶ Kane, vol. 2, part I, p. 118 and vol. 2, part 11, p. 840.

⁸⁷ Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, vol. 1, Inscriptions of Aśoka. New Edition by E. Hultzsch, Oxford, 1925, p. 33-34.

⁸⁸ See for instance the eighth, ninth and eleventh rock-inscriptions of Kalsi, *ibid.*, p. 37-38.

⁸⁹ Fleet, op.cit., p. 180 and 190.

⁹⁰ Bhagavadgītā 17.20-22.

⁹¹ Bhagavadgītā 3.11-12.

⁹² Anguttara Nikāya 1.134. Translation p. 117.

⁹³ Dhammapāla. *Elucidation of the Intrinsic Meaning So Named the Commentary on the Peta-Stories*. Translated by U Ba Kyaw. Edited and Annotated by Peter Masefield. London, 1980, p. 10.

⁹⁴ Dundas, Paul (1992). *The Jains*. London. Routledge, p. 84. Schubring, Walther (1962). *The Doctrine of the Jainas*. Delhi, p. 174.

⁹⁵ Jaini, P.S. (1974). *The Jaina Path of Purification*. Delhi, p. 112.

⁹⁶ Quoted in Laidlaw, James (1995). *Riches and Renunciation*. Oxford, p. 193.

⁹⁷ Kane vol. 2, part 1, p. 116.

⁹⁸ Gonda, Jan (1975). "‘Gifts’ and ‘Giving’ in the Rgveda." *Selected Studies*, vol. 4, Leiden, p. 134.

⁹⁹ Gombrich, Richard F. (1971). *Precept and Practice. Traditional Buddhism in the Rural Highlands of Ceylon*. Oxford, p. 248-9.

¹⁰⁰ See Laidlaw, op.cit., p. 296ff.

¹⁰¹ Cort, John E. (1991). "Two Ideals of the śvetāmbar Mürtipūjak Jain Layman." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 19, pp. 394 and 395.

¹⁰² ibid., p. 193ff.

¹⁰³ Dumont, op.cit., p. 117.

¹⁰⁴ Dakkhināvibhaṅgasutta, Majjhima Nikāya, edited by Lord Chalmers. London, 1951, p. 253ff. Translation: Further Dialogues of the Buddha, London, 1927, p. 299ff.

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BOOK REVIEWS

LUC BRISSON, *Orphée et l'Orphisme dans l'Antiquité gréco-romaine*. Collected studies series, 476 — Aldershot: Variorum 1995 (viii + 301 p.) ISBN 0-86078453-3 US \$87.50 (pbk.).

Among recent studies on Orphism which have followed the discovery of new evidence, a special position must be accorded to the reflections of Luc Brisson. He has dedicated numerous essays to the later Orphic literature, but above all he has attempted a comprehensive interpretation of the Orphic phenomenon which, while still considering recent contributions, has not abandoned the rules of an acquired prudence. These essays, spanning an arc from 1985 to 1992, are now collected in the volume *Orphée et l'Orphisme dans l'Antiquité gréco-romaine*, preceded by an introduction which traces their unitary theme.

The guiding thread of the book is the attempt to put the surviving fragments back into the context that is rightfully their own, in the conviction that they obtain coherence only in terms of the philosophical system in which they are embraced, notwithstanding the antiquity that it is possible to recognize in this or that element.

As is well-known, the bulk of the direct evidence on Orphism comes down to us from the later Neoplatonists. It was a natural tendency of the Neoplatonists to read Plato in a theological key and to base the validity of their reading, whenever possible, on illustrating Platonic expressions with quotations from the Orphic poems. Hence, Brisson points out the risk for someone who attempts to read Plato in the mirror of possible Orphic influences "to interpret Plato beginning from an already Platonized Orphism" (p. 5).

Nevertheless the discovery of the Derveni Papyrus, which has established the dating of some elements of the Rhapsodic Theogonies to the fourth century B.C., has re-opened the question that long seemed to have been closed with the sceptical critique of Wilamowitz and Linforth (cf. on this subject the recent *Studies on the Derveni Papyrus*, ed. A. Laks and G.W. Most, Oxford 1997). The dating of the Orphic Theogonies is once again fundamental as a key in which to read numerous Platonic passages, and more generally,

as a framework for a correct statement of the problem of the origins of philosophy (at least in the morphological view advanced by Cornford of a mirroring of logical and religious structures).

M.L. West in *The Orphic Poems* (Oxford, 1983) has been the first to attempt a reconstruction of the Orphic theogony commented upon in the Derveni Papyrus. His *exempli gratia* begins with the reign of Zeus, has its central moment in the second world-order carried out by Zeus after the *kataposis* of Phanes, and reassumes the first cosmogonical order in four divine generations: Phanes-Gea-Ouranos-Kronos. Despite what might well be expected, however, West does not take this theogonic *résumé* back to the earliest attested version (the theogony of Eudemus mentioned by Damascius). Instead, in reconstructing the events preceding the reign of Zeus on the basis of the Rhapsodic Theogony which began with Chronos, he singles out two versions in the early tradition: an older one dating to the sixth century (the Protogenos Theogony, prototype of the Derveni Theogony) having Chronos as its principle, and a more recent one (the Eudemian), which "made the origin of things from Night." These two versions would be at the basis of the cyclical Theogonies that, in turn, with the Hieronymian Theogony (a 'modernized' elaboration of the Protogenos Theogony) would come together in the Rhapsodies.

West's genealogical labyrinth (six theogonic versions in comparison with the three enucleated by Kern following Damascius) is impossible to verify. This puts Brisson in a good position to oppose the theogonic multiplication with the individuation of a minimum criterion of orientation. On the basis of the change of the first principle, which produces the cosmic Egg (Nyx or Chronos) — a change involving a shifting of the logical axis — Brisson distinguishes between a tradition dating back probably to the fifth century B.C. and the poems to which this tradition could have given rise in successive epochs.

The first four theogonies distinguished by West (theogonies of Protogenos, of Derveni, of Eudemus, Cyclical theogonies), are traced back to a unique version known in the Greek world between the fifth and sixth century B.C. Of this all that we know is that Night had a cosmogonic priority, while its outcome in the anthropogony would be completely hypothetical. In this case Linforth's conclusions would remain indisputable.

This earliest version would be the basis of the new two versions (the Rhapsodic and the Hieronymynian), essentially distinguishable by the substitution of Night with Chronos. Of these two the second (where Chronos is

born from the water and the material of which the earth is composed) would not be other than an ulterior remoulding of the first, undertaken to assure a coincidence between Orpheus, Homer, and Hesiod on the question of first principles (this thesis has been confirmed in his *Chronos in Column XII of the Derveni Papyrus* in *Studies on Derveni Papyrus*, cit., pp. 149-165). In this way the theogonic *stemma* of West is completely overturned: the model placed by him at the origin shifts at the opening of the Christian era; the derivation *Rhapsodies — Hieronymynian Theogony* is reversed. The resemblance of the Iranian *Zrvan Akarana* (Endless Time) to the Orphic Chronos *ageraos* (Ageless Time), which for West (revisiting Eisler) must guarantee the antiquity of the Protagonos Theogony, is in contradiction, according to Brisson, for the early period with all the surviving references, of which the testimony of Eudemus, who clearly distinguished the *arche* of the Orphics from that of the Magi, can be taken as recapitulation. Furthermore, the customary proof from Pindar (*Ol.* II, 17) to the contested fragment of Pherecydes (B1DK) appears to Brisson fragile and unfounded.

The task of the research is then to find, on another historical level, the concrete link that can explain the theoretical homology singled out in the two figures. Brisson finds it in the Mithraic Aion-saeculum, the lion-headed deity which borrowed many features from the Persian Zrvan and which shared its iconographic representation with the Orphic Phanes. This leads him to place between the end of the first century and the beginning of the second the renewal of Orphism, on which Mithraism in full expansion would have exerted its influence. This date would permit explaining the presence in the Rhapsodies of Stoic, Neo-Pythagorean, Middle-Platonic elements. Finally, it would permit understanding why Neoplatonists, from Iamblicus to Proclus, found in it traces of a prefiguration of their own system.

Of the two poles between which Orphic hermeneutics oscillate — the hypothesis of a unitary tradition whose broad lines it is possible to recognize from the archaic period, and the resumption of the full-edged Orphic mythology in a later epoch — Brisson orients himself towards the second: the possibility of reconstructing the earliest mythological substratum is met with substantial scepticism. Also, the anthropogony, which in its extreme formulation appears only in the later Neoplatonists but has generally been considered the necessary outcome of Orphic religion from its beginning, is limited to the theological reform realized by the Rhapsodies, while the motif of human goodness and divinity, inherited by the consubstantiality with Dionysus, is ascribed exclusively to Olympiodorus. The tale of the birth of

mankind from the ashes of the Titans, which fixes in an unexceptionable way the cosmic dualism present in the human drama, would really be the mystical interpretation of an alchemic operation, created *ad hoc* by Olympiodorus in his commentary to the *Phaedo*, in order to explain the unlawfulness of suicide: "Therefore suicide is forbidden, not because . . . we wear the body as a kind of shackle . . . but it is forbidden because our bodies belong to Dionysus; we are, in fact, a part of him, being made of the soot of the Titans who ate his flesh" (Olympiodorus I, 3 — Westerink).

The competence with which Brisson moves among the Hellenistic sources makes his argument extremely persuasive. The impression, however, remains that in some way the weight of the convergence of the indirect evidence is undervalued.

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GULIANA SCALERA MCCLINTOCK

HANS G. KIPPENBERG, *Die Entdeckung der Religionsgeschichte. Religionswissenschaft und Moderne*—Munich: C.H. Beck 1997 (342 p.) ISBN: 3-406-42882-7 (pbk.) DM 39.80.

During the last decade scholars have become increasingly aware of the fact that the cultural process of modernity causes changes not only in religious attitudes and behaviour but also with regard to the academic study of religions. Writing the history of religions is not a mere collection and presentation of given data that can be right or wrong. The presentation of a religious story leaves the safe harbour of "facts" and develops into an act of creativity that reflects the personal meaning of the scholar. This meaning is involved in and bound to a cultural discourse about religion and history.

This is the point where Hans G. Kippenberg departs from when he tells the (meta-) story of "the discovery of the history of religions". He rightly observes that the usual way of presenting the development of *Religionswissenschaft* as an academic branch fails to recognize the interlacing of the cultural setting with the scholarly theories and methods. Kippenberg takes the period between 1850 and 1920 to demonstrate how the discovery of ancient cultures, the deciphering of previously unknown scripts or the process of disenchantment shaped the young *Religionswissenschaft*. Following the

discourses of philology, anthropology and sociology the author shows how people became aware of the important role religious attitudes played in the history of mankind. The discoveries "were all counted as witnesses to a past, estranged culture that lies before, in, beside or under the present civilization" (p. 10). Thus the history of religions became a means to detect the hidden forces underlying the process of culture. And philosophy of religion became the history of religions.

This book is an important contribution to the actual discussion of modernity and postmodernity that has reached the academic study of religions. It is intelligently written and fun to read. In the last chapter Kippenberg applies the results of his study in a wider methodological context and raises the question whether to acknowledge the quality of fiction in the writing of history does automatically mean to hold it totally contingent or subjective. The obvious process of hypotheses and falsification in the theory of religions shows that this is not the case. Still the dilemma of relativism lurks in the background and needs further consideration. Kippenberg sketches various possible solutions but a detailed analysis of that important question is beyond the scope of his study. His task is to give a vivid historical description of the phenomenon. The discussion is worth being carried on.

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DAI, KANGSHENG, XINYING ZHANG, and MICHAEL PYE (Eds.), *Religion and Modernization in China: Proceedings of the Regional Conference of the International Association for the History of Religions Held in Beijing, China, April 1992*. Cambridge: Roots and Branches (for the International Association for the History of Religions) 1995 (8 + 346 p.), ISBN 0-9525772-0-8 (pbk.), \$22.00.

Communist parties in power generally view religious organizations as rivals and religious adherence as a perversely voluntary continuation of the very feudal behavior whose necessity Communism has pledged to eradicate. With a remarkable variety of religious traditions dating back millennia and a current resurgence of religious practice, official China cannot overlook

the obvious daily evidence that religion continues to play an important part in Chinese life. Caught in this dilemma, the Chinese government is understandably ambivalent about the study of religion. For these reasons, the principal value of this volume is that a conference on religion did take place in China and that there is a book recording it.

Particularly given its title, this is something of a strange book. Most of the non-Chinese contributions to the volume give accounts or make statements which have been made before by the same author or others; less than half concern religion in China. Most of the Chinese contributions are somewhat circumspect in coverage of subject and mode of expression; most of these, too, tend to be general, sometimes theological, statements rather than discussions of religion in China. The ostensible subject—religion and modernization in China—remains a difficult subject for open discussion. (Stated simply, the unmentioned reality behind this topic is that China is being successfully modernized through Communism, but on a base that was launched with substantial aid from Christian missionaries, whose institutional and disciplinary influence persists.) Although historically and currently a formidable force, ‘Chinese popular religion’ gets only sporadic mention. State Communism is the direct heir of state Confucianism, and neither of these “rationalist” ideologies easily brooks the exuberant and very distracting aesthetic that an intimate and omnivorous polytheism provides. (To the excruciating embarrassment of government and intellectuals, Mao Zedong is now considered by many to be a god, and, there have even been attempts to erect temples to him.) Important scholars who have provided substantial insights into Chinese religion were not present at the conference (X. Ma, B. Han, L. Thompson, J. Ching, D. Sommer, D. Overmyer, R. Taylor, S. Cahill, to note just a few). While occasionally mentioned (most prominently in connection with Manichaeism by Luther Martin), syncretism, which is the overwhelming leitmotif of Chinese religion, gets scant attention.

These and other similar lacunae would be substantial defects in a purely scholarly volume whose purpose was to add incrementally to our general understanding of religion in China. But this was not a gathering of China specialists all of whom know each other’s work intimately, but an initial get-acquainted meeting of a disparate group of scholars, mostly generalists, who did not know each other either as people or as minds, and who were largely ignorant of each other’s work. At the record of that kind of meeting, the thirty-five pieces collected here offer some interesting gems, albeit from

somewhat obliquely cut stones, which are scattered randomly throughout the book. An interesting instance is Dusan Luzny's account of the popularity in the renewed Czech Republic of the Dalai Lama, Hare Krishna, yoga and martial arts, suggesting that the 'turning East' which has long been documented for Western Europe and North is present in Eastern Europe as well. Another is Michael Pye's acute observation that it is the *non-Chinese* who exaggerate the 'harmony' that they see in Chinese religion because of their ignorance of historical periods of conflict.

However, most of the hidden gems of this book are to be found in the implications of the Chinese contributors. Stated in much different ways, the separate papers by X. Huang, X. Zhuo, Y. Chen, and G. He, collectively encompass two themes which have been central to the domestic modernization debate throughout the past two centuries: the need to preserve the uniqueness of Chinese culture and the need for a spiritual corrective to the consuming materialism which accompanies the prosperity brought by modernization. Y. Chen's conclusion that Taoist efforts to adapt to modern Chinese society 'should be based only on China itself, [and] it should never place its hopes on foreign aid or copy the European and American model' (110) is much sharper than Z. Chen's comments on the unifying of the Protestant churches in China, but for both it is China at the center. X. Huang speaks historically, but leads directly into X. Zhou's insistence that '*modernization itself generates problems that increase the need for religion*' (43, italics original), to which G. He agrees in his section on 'The Need for Religion in Modernization' (pp. 277-328). Because too many of our China watchers have been political scientists, the profound and widespread longings that underlie sporadic attempts at eradicating 'spiritual pollution' and preserving China's soul are too easily interpreted shallowly in terms of organizational politics. When it is finally analyzed in all of its complexity, the initial popularity of the devastating Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), is certain to be found in a common Chinese sense that 'Modern China' as both a spiritual and physical reality has yet to be defined and is yet to assert itself.

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TIMOTHY LIGHT

ALI S. ASANI and KAMAL ABDEL-MALEK, in collaboration with ANNEMARIE SCHIMMEL, *Celebrating Muḥammad. Images of the Prophet in Popular Muslim Poetry*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1995 (xv + 126 p.) ISBN 1-57003-050-2 (hc.) \$34.95.

There have been innumerable studies about the historical Muḥammad of seventh-century Arabia. Works about Muḥammad's spiritual role in the lives of pious Muslims through the ages, however, are few and far between. Therefore, this book about "celebrating Muḥammad: Images of the Prophet in Popular Muslim Poetry" is to be welcomed.

First the prologue (pp. 1-9) and then the introduction (pp. 10-15, written by Annemarie Schimmel) acquaint non-specialist readers with basic notions about God, prophethood and the veneration of the Prophet Muḥammad in Islam. The two parts which follow deal with the veneration in two different parts of the Muslim world, i.e., the Indian subcontinent and Egypt. Part 1 (pp. 19-45) is about two Indian poets, namely 'Abd ur-Ra'ūf Bhaṭṭī (d. 1752), whose work was heavily influenced by the rural folk traditions of the Sind region, and secondly Muḥsin Kākorawī (d. 1905), who belonged to the sophisticated urban culture of Northern India.

Part 2 (pp. 49-74) examines a ballad in colloquial Egyptian Arabic, describing the Prophet's trading journey to Syria and his marriage to Khadija. One version of this ballad was published by Enno Littmann in 1950 (*Mohammed im Volkseplos. Ein neuarabisches Heiligenlied*). Finally, an epilogue (pp. 75-80, written in collaboration with Annemarie Schimmel) and two appendixes are given. Appendix 1 (pp. 81-106) contains selected poems translated from Sindhi and Urdu and colloquial Egyptian Arabic, whereas Appendix 2 (pp. 107-109) describes some of the literary forms employed for composing poetry in praise of Muḥammad.

Kamal Abdel-Malek rightly criticizes "the excessive preoccupation with the texts" of Arab and Western scholars "rather than the local contexts" (p. 51). Yet the actual use of the poetry is lacking in this book. We are told, for example, that the Egyptian ballad has a strong anti-Christian and anti-Jewish "us-versus-them" dichotomy. Furthermore it presents a Christ-like image of Muḥammad (pp. 60-64). However, questions pertaining to the background of this ballad and its function today in Cairo are not asked.

This small book of an introductory nature whets the reader's appetite for more.

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EDWIN WIERINGA

JUNE CAMPBELL, *Traveller in Space. In Search of Female Identity in Tibetan Buddhism* — London: The Athlone Press 1997 (225 p.) ISBN 0-485-11494-1 (hb.) £17.95.

This is certainly one of the most important books on Tibetan Buddhism which has been written in the last years. Starting from her own rather traumatic experience as a "secret consort" of a very high Tibetan lama, Kalu Rinpoche, the author manages not to remain within self-pity but to draw from her insider-knowledge of Tibetan society a very clear, innovative and convincing analysis of the hierarchical system of Tibet. She shows that at the basis of Tibetan Buddhist hierarchy there is a twofold exclusion of women:

1. None but one of the many genealogies of so-called tulku (i.e., consciously reborn hierarchs like e.g. the Dalai Lama, who is considered to be the 14th reincarnation of the same enlightened person), includes any females, and, moreover, every boy being recognized as a reincarnation has to leave his mother as a very small child (starting from about three years of age) to be educated in the purely male society of the monasteries. Thereby the boys are deprived of their mothers at a much too early age while the women are deprived of their function as mothers, which is part of their female identity as well as of their importance for society.

2. Tantric ritual practices allow celibate monks from a certain grade of their spiritual development onwards to take a female consort secretly (i.e., while publicly remaining celibate) in order to do the most advanced religious practices leading to enlightenment according to Tantric doctrine. Since the woman does not have the right to speak to anybody about this secret relationship, she is totally dependent on the lama and does not have the same right as the lama himself to teach her tantric experiences to others, especially to other women. So again the whole system, while being based on

the cooperation of women, does not in the least acknowledge their part in it, leave alone give them a position in the hierarchy. Tantric sexuality, which is meant to be a voluntary and mutual religious practice of two advanced disciples, has been changed in Tibet to something very near to sexual instrumentalization if not misuse of the woman. Furthermore the author shows that several other basic assumptions of Tantric Buddhist theory and practice are androcentric and do not cope with the spiritual needs of women even in areas where the social and psychological background of men and women is different.

The book already began to incite discussions among Western adepts of Tibetan Buddhism who find themselves more clearly now than before in the need of rethinking how much of Tibetan religion they want to adopt: its very effective meditation methods and liberation path only or together with it also the partly rather suppressive and inequalitarian religious hierarchy which some lamas do consider to be inseparable from the teachings even when the latter are being practised in a Western cultural context.

Some rather speculative or even erroneous passages (there is no convincing evidence for the existence of the alleged prehistoric female predecessor "Manipadmā" of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara in Chapter 3; the etymology of Skt. *dākinī* is surely connected with the sky, since Buddhist Sanskrit texts derive it from the verbal root *dī-* "to fly" and explain it as *ākāśagāminī* "female sky-goer", cf. Adelheid Herrmann-Pfandt, *Dākinīs: Zur Stellung und Symbolik des Weiblichen im tantrischen Buddhismus*, Bonn, 1992, 115) do not in the least diminish the merit of this book, which should be read by all those being interested either in traditional Tibet, in Women's Studies in Religion or in the fascinating process by which Tibetan Buddhism is being integrated into Western culture.

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NEW APPOINTMENTS IN THE INTERNATIONAL
ASSOCIATION FOR THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS (IAHR)

ARMIN W. GEERTZ
General Secretary of the IAHR

During May 22-25, 1998 approximately 120 scholars from Europe and elsewhere in the world converged on the old city of Hildesheim, just south of Hannover, to discuss the "History of Religions in Europe". The conference was designated an IAHR Regional Conference and was hosted by one of the vice-presidents of the IAHR, Prof. Dr. Dr. Peter Antes, from the Seminar für Religionswissenschaft at the University of Hannover.

The conference was formulated in relation to the coming international world fair EXPO 2000 to be held in Hannover and its surroundings. The EXPO 2000 has the theme "Mankind-Nature-Technology" (see the website: <http://www.EXPO2000.de>), and because the events already announced are purely technological or ecological, it was the hope of the conference organizer that historians of religions could contribute insights on the theme in relation to religion. The conference was a great success both professionally and socially, the latter especially due to the fact that Hildesheim held a colorful city festival that same weekend.

From an organizational point of view, the IAHR was strongly represented at the conference, not the least due to the financial efforts of Peter Antes. The result was that the Executive Committee of the IAHR met in its entirety for the first time since the elections in Mexico City in 1995. Furthermore, a large number of delegates were present at the meeting of the International Committee of the IAHR, which is its democratic body. Both bodies functioned effectively and creatively on a number of issues and events, and the results will be announced in detail in the next *IAHR Bulletin* as well as the *IAHR Bulletin Supplement*. This short report concerns three important announcements. The first announcement concerns the change of the managing editors of *Numen*. As is well-known, *Numen* is the official journal of the IAHR. The managing editors, Prof. Hans G. Kippenberg (Bremen) and Prof. E. Thomas Lawson (Kalamazoo), act on behalf of an international editorial board consisting of the Executive Committee of the IAHR. The Editorial

Board meets in conjunction with the annual Executive Committee meetings in order to receive a report from the managing editors and to discuss matters of policy. The IAHR appoints the managing editors in agreement with the Publisher, E.J. Brill, for a period of five years, renewable for a second period of five years, after which new editors shall be appointed. The managing editors edit the journal and act as sole representatives of the IAHR in all dealings with regard to the publication of the journal. The managing editors are chosen for their knowledge of the activities of the IAHR and commitment to its stated goals; their scholarly standing in the field; a senior position which allows some flexibility, access to facilities, and time to travel; some possibility of delegating subordinate tasks; previous editorial experience; proven record of helpful collaboration with others; ability to work to deadlines; excellent command of English and some knowledge of other languages; and awareness of current debates in the study of religion.

The IAHR has attempted to introduce an alternate succession of editorial appointments to ensure that only one editor retires at the end of each five year period, and the present editors graciously agreed to extend their terms of office a number of years ago in order to make an alternate succession process possible. However, after careful deliberations between the Executive Committee, the managing editors and E.J. Brill, it was unanimously decided that both of the present editors will retire at the XVIIIth Quinquennial Congress of the IAHR in Durban, South Africa on August 5-12, 2000. By then, Prof. Hans G. Kippenberg will have given us twelve years of service and Prof. E. Thomas Lawson ten years. Their skill and editorial proficiency has left an indelible impression on the IAHR and has met with widespread acclaim. *Numen* is the flagship of the IAHR. It has a proud tradition of quality and international coverage, and both Prof. Kippenberg and Prof. Lawson have carried this tradition onward as well as kept the journal in tune with current developments in our subject.

The Executive Committee is happy to announce the appointment of Professor Einar Thomassen, University of Bergen, Norway, and Professor Michel Despland, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada as the new managing editors of *Numen*. Their formal period of appointment is for the five year period of 2000-2005, and during the coming two years up to the Durban Congress, the practical transfer of editorial procedures will be effectuated. All manuscripts and other matters that concern the issues appearing from 2000 (XLVII/3) should be sent to the incoming managing editors.

Einar Thomassen is a graduate of Bergen and St. Andrews and has taught at the universities of Bergen, Uppsala and Oslo. In 1993 he became professor in the history of religions at the University of Bergen. Einar Thomassen served as secretary of the Norsk Religionshistorisk Forening (NRF) 1990-94, and has been its president since 1994. He has served as head of the Institute of Classics, Russian and the History of Religions at the University of Bergen since 1995. His main fields of interest are early Christianity and gnosticism, and Islam, especially Islamic mysticism. He has published *Le Traité Tripartite* (1989), *Den filologiske vitenskap* (1990, with Odd Einar Haugen), and *The Letters of Ahmad b. Idris* (1993, with Bernd Radtke). His interests also include hermeneutic theory, canonicity, orthodoxy and heresy, ritual theory, and religious education in schools. While committed to the continued importance of classical fields and methods in the history of religions, he is also an advocate of philosophically and sociologically informed theoretical awareness in the discipline. He is currently preparing a monograph on Valentinian gnosticism, a text book on Christianity for history of religions students, and a source book on the major religions for religious education teachers in Norwegian primary schools. Prof. Thomassen's address is Department of the History of Religions, University of Bergen, Øisteinsgate 3, N-5007 Bergen, Norway (e-mail: Einar.Thomassen@krt.uib.no).

Michel Despland is a graduate of Lausanne and Harvard Universities and has been teaching at Concordia University, Montréal, Québec, since 1966. He has served among things as president of a Société québécoise pour l'étude de la religion (SQÉR). He is the author of books on the philosophy of religion: *Kant on History and Religion* (1973) and *The Education of Desire. Plato and the Philosophy of Religion* (1985). His work on the history of the concept of religion (*La Religion en Occident. Évolution des idées et du vécu*, 1979, 1988) led him to further studies on 19th century France. One of its dimensions has been a plea for the use of literary evidence and for new strategies in writing modern religious history (*Reading an Erased Code. French Literary Aesthetics and Romantic Religion*, 1994). Another dimension is the exploration of the history of the disciplined study of religion: together with Louis Rousseau, *Les sciences religieuses au Québec depuis 1972* (1988), and *La tradition française en sciences religieuses* (1991). Another publication that is forthcoming is *Les sciences religieuses sous la Monarchie de Juillet*. Prof. Despland's address is Département des sciences religieuses, Université Concordia, 1455, boulevard de Maisonneuve ouest, Montréal, Québec, H3G 1M8 Canada (e-mail: desplan@vax2.concordia.ca).

The Executive Committee formally recognized at its meeting in Turku in 1997 the need for a separate Reviews Editor. Since 1990, Dr. Brigitte Luchesi at the University of Bremen has done an excellent job in that capacity. Therefore, the Executive Committee formally appointed Dr. Brigitte Luchesi for a five year period as Reviews Editor (1998-2003) at its meeting in Hildesheim. Brigitte Luchesi was born in Vienna, Austria and grew up in Germany. After earning a degree in sociology at the University of Frankfurt/Main (1969), she moved to Berlin for further training in Jewish Studies, Religious Studies and Social Anthropology. She completed her Ph.D. in Social Anthropology in 1982. She taught at the Institute for Jewish Studies, Free University Berlin, between 1970 and 1975 and at the Institute for Social Anthropology, Berlin, from 1980 until her move to Bremen in 1989 where she took up an appointment in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Bremen. Her fields of academic interest include Hindu Religions, Social Anthropology of Religion and Visible Religion. Since 1978 she has undertaken regular fieldtrips first to Bangladesh and then to North India to study local forms of religiosity, especially among Hindu women. Since 1990 she has assisted the editors of *Numen* in publishing the journal, and she has also served as treasurer of the Deutsche Vereinigung für Religionsgeschichte (DVRG). Her address is Universität Bremen, Fachbereich 9, Postfach 330440, D-28334 Bremen, Germany (e-mail: luchesi@religion.uni-bremen.de).

We welcome this new team and wish them all the best.

The final important announcement to be made concerns the appointment of a new treasurer of the IAHR. Since his election in Mexico City in 1995, Professor Donald Wiebe at Trinity College, University of Toronto, Canada has served faithfully as the treasurer of the IAHR. During the International Committee meeting in Hildesheim, however, he announced that he was retiring from that office for reasons of health. Donald Wiebe has been a leading figure in the IAHR and at IAHR events for several decades. His unwavering intellectual stature and his wisdom in organizational matters have long been sources of inspiration to all of us. We are all grateful for his service through the years. The sadness of his leaving the Executive Committee is, however, off-set by the fact that he will continue to be a source of inspiration and debate in future IAHR events.

The constitution of the IAHR states in article 4.c that in the event of the resignation of any serving officer, a suitable replacement may be nominated by the Executive Committee until the next quinquennial congress. After

deliberating on the matter, the Executive Committee asked Professor Gary Lease at the University of California in Santa Cruz, USA, if he would take up the job as treasurer until Durban 2000. Because of his scholarly and organizational talents as well as his continued support of the IAHR, it is the considered opinion of the Executive Committee that Prof. Lease would be a fitting officer of the IAHR. Prof. Lease graciously agreed to accept the appointment.

Gary Lease was born in Hollywood, California and is professor of History of Consciousness at the University of California, Santa Cruz, where he has served as chair of Religious Studies, History of Consciousness and Environmental Studies. He has also served as Associate Chancellor and Dean of Humanities. Gary Lease took his doctorate in 1968 at the University of Munich in the history of theology. His extensive publications are concentrated in the history of religious thought in 19th and 20th century Germany (editions of Harnack and Sohm; articles on religion and National Socialism; German Judaism, especially in his book "*Odd Fellows*" in the *Politics of Religion: Modernism, National Socialism, and German Judaism*, Berlin 1995; a book-length biography and study of Hans-Joachim Schoeps); late antiquity Mediterranean religious history (articles and essays on Mithraism; Egyptian monasticism, including the book *Traces of Early Egyptian Monasticism*, Claremont 1991; Near Eastern archaeology); and theories of religion (articles and essays as well as a forthcoming book on religion and historiographical theories; religion and politics; religion as ideology and cultural artifact). Among other organizations, he is a member of the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE); American Society for the Study of Religion (ASSR), of which he is its current secretary; International Association for Coptic Studies (IACS); and the North American Association for the Study of Religion (NAASR), of which he is its current executive secretary. His address is Merrill College, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA 95064, USA (e-mail: rehbock@cats.ucsc.edu).

The Executive Committee welcomes Prof. Lease and looks forward to working with him.

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ARMIN W. GEERTZ

ANNOUNCEMENT

18th Quinquennial Congress of the International Association
for the History of Religions
5-12 August, 2000, Durban, South Africa

Call for Panels and Papers

Congress Theme: The History of Religions: Origins and Visions

The International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR) is an international body of national and regional societies for the academic study of religion. It is a member of the Conseil international de la philosophie et des sciences humaines (CIPSH) under UNESCO. Through its regional and international congresses it brings together scholars from around the world to discuss, debate and exchange views on their subject. The Executive Committee of the IAHR met in August 1997 in Turku, Finland and unanimously decided to hold its XVIIIth Congress in the year 2000 in Durban, South Africa. The Department of Science of Religion at the University of Durban-Westville, in co-operation with key members of the Association for the Study of Religion in Southern Africa, has been requested to host the event. This upcoming Congress in August 2000 is significant for a number of reasons. First, it will be the first IAHR congress ever held on the African continent. Second, the IAHR Congress in the year 2000 will coincide with the 50th anniversary of the founding of the IAHR in Amsterdam. Third, it will also mark the 100th anniversary of scientific congresses in the History of Religions.

Several questions arise as the year 2000 draws near. First, it will be appropriate to take stock and reflect on where we as an international body of scholars engaged in a common scholarly enterprise are coming from. What are the central themes, the important empirical areas, the debated issues and the shared approaches that have carried us to this point in time? In which parts of the world have we succeeded and why? How has the history of religions contributed to educational and cultural development in

general? Second, it will also be appropriate to discuss directions for the future. In what ways does increasing globalisation change the nature of the subject of our study? What methodological and theoretical approaches are most appropriate to these challenges? Is the history of religions capable of dealing with these new developments, and is the IAHR doing what it can in these respects? Are we truly engaged in a common endeavour?

The Durban Congress seeks in particular to promote the cross-cultural, interdisciplinary, comparativist and critical study of religion, as well as newer and neglected areas of research, rather than just the tradition-specific sections which have characterised previous congresses. There is also a concern to examine, wherever appropriate, the links between the theoretical, methodological, empirical, and pedagogical aspects of our field of study. To this end, a number of panels and symposia are already being planned on religious education, multiculturalism, the political economy of religious studies, fieldwork, texts and textuality, comparativism, globalisation, syncretism, millennialism, shamanism, spirituality, religion and human rights, civil society, media, cyberspace, diaspora, material and expressive culture, gender, ecology, healing, literature, cognition, cultural studies, tourism, etc. Several of these themes will highlight the rich diversity of religious traditions in Africa, not least South Africa, and the heritage of several decades of African scholarship on the study of religion.

Key Dates

1. Proposals for panels, symposia and roundtables to reach the Secretariat on or before 30 November 1998.
2. Proposals for individual papers to reach the Secretariat on or before 31 March 1999.
3. Accepted proposals will be notified by 30 June to 31 August 1999.
4. All participants whose proposals have been accepted should pre-register on or before 31 December 1999 in order to be on the programme. No exceptions will be made in this regard.
5. Final registration materials will be sent to pre-registered participants by 30 April 2000.
6. All requests for the Reduced Registration Fee (for participants from countries with weaker currencies) must arrive at the Secretariat with appropriate documentation on or before 31 December 1998.

7. On site registration only for participants who are not presenting papers.

*Academic Programme***1. Keynote addresses**

The keynote addresses are given by distinguished scholars who are invited by the Congress Academic Programme Committee.

2. Plenary sessions

Plenary sessions consist of responses by a panel of experts to the keynote addresses.

3. Panels

Panels consist of three panelists (possibly four) with a panel convener as the chair. The duration is 2 hours. The proposal should contain the title of the panel, the names and institutional affiliations of the panelists, and a 150 word abstract of the topic. The proposal should be sent by the convener. Note: conveners may decide to leave panels partially open to allow for later submissions once the panel is advertized.

4. Symposia

Groups of scholars engaged in a particular project which will likely lead to publication may submit a proposal for a symposium. It is expected that these groups will circulate their papers for discussion prior to the congress. The proposal should contain the title of the symposium, the names and institutional affiliations of panelists (if possible), and a 150 word abstract of the topic. The duration of the symposium is 2 hours. Additional sessions can be arranged.

5. Roundtable sessions

Roundtable sessions consist of a maximum of 10 participants around a table. These are meant for more detailed discussion among scholars on their respective research projects. Space for these sessions is limited. Proposals for these sessions should consist of the title of the paper, full name and institutional affiliation of the presenter, and a 150 word abstract. Those whose proposals are accepted are strongly urged to send 10 copies of the complete paper in advance for circulation among those who register for the roundtable sessions. Scholars are encouraged to advertise their own proposed roundtable sessions to ensure maximum participation.

6. Individual Papers

Every attempt will be made to organise individual papers into coherent sessions. In any given session there will be three papers lasting 90 minutes. Proposals for individual papers should consist of the title of the paper, full name and institutional affiliation of the presenter, and a 150 word abstract.

Exhibitors' Information

Book sellers, publishers, and others are invited to exhibit their products at the congress site. Those who wish to exhibit books, computers, software, etc., should contact the Secretariat for details regarding the exhibition. Space is limited and therefore we encourage prospective exhibitors to book well in advance. Please contact the address below for more details.

Guidelines for Submission

Further details on Durban and the Congress (e.g. accommodation, travel, tourism, etc.) may be found on the Congress website at
[<http://www.udw.ac.za/iahr>](http://www.udw.ac.za/iahr)

Questions regarding panel and paper proposals may be directed to Professor Rosalind I.J. Hackett (Chair, Congress Academic Programme Committee) at <rhackett@utk.edu>

Panel proposals will be posted early 1999 to encourage paper submissions. Individual papers may be submitted independent of any panel, but wherever possible should reflect the congress theme.

All final panel and paper submissions, and questions regarding the organization of the congress, should be sent to:

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Congress Website: <http://www.udw.ac.za/iahr>

Reminder: Due date for panel proposals is 30 November 1998 and for papers, 30 April 1999.

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